

# *The Shepherd*

# *Psalms*



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LOOKING BEYOND

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# THE SHEPHERD PSALM AND LOOKING BEYOND

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Bible Teacher and Author

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Box 233

Lincoln 1, Nebraska

(Published through special arrangement with Moody Press)



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# CONTENTS

## THE SHEPHERD PSALM

FOREWORD .....	7
INTRODUCTION .....	9
CHAPTER	
I. "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want .....	17
II. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside still waters" .....	24
III. "He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake" .....	33
IV. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" ....	51
V. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over" .....	63
VI. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever" .....	68

## LOOKING BEYOND

CHAPTER	
THE TEXT .....	75
I. LIFE'S GREAT NEED .....	77
II. THIS LIFE IS NOT ALL .....	84
III. A CHEERFUL VIEW OF DEATH .....	91
IV. "THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT" .....	102
V. OUR FUTURE REWARD .....	115



THE SHEPHERD PSALM





## FOREWORD

**T**HIS production of the Shepherd Psalm is sent forth at the request of many hundreds of kind persons who have listened to the writer preach on it and who desire to see it in print, that it may be a blessing to many who cannot hear it.

It is a well-known Psalm. Untold numbers of sermons have been preached on it. Books without number have been printed in attempts to set forth its life, depth, richness, and beauty. Doubtless much more will be written and spoken concerning this charming pastoral symphony—and, after that, much more will remain yet to be said, so full is the inspiration of the divine Word. May God make this Psalm to the reader all that it has been—yea, and more—to the writer!

WILLIAM EVANS



## INTRODUCTION

THE world could afford to spare many a magnificent library better than it could dispense with this little Psalm of six verses. If the verses of this Psalm had tongues and could repeat the tale of their ministry down throughout the generations of the faithful, what marvels of experience they would reveal! Their biographies would be gathered from the four winds of heaven and from the uttermost parts of the sea; from lonely chambers, from suffering sickbeds, from the banks of the valley of the shadow of death, from scaffolds and fiery piles; witnessing in sunlight from moors and mountains, beneath the stars and in high places of the field. What hosts of armies of aliens it has put to flight! If by some magic or divine touch, yea, some miraculous power, the saints' experience of this Psalm could shine out between its lines, what an illumination of the text there would be!

Luther was fond of comparing this Psalm to the nightingale, which is small among the birds and of homely plumage, but with what thrilling melody it pours out its beautiful notes! Into how many dungeons filled with gloom and doubt has this little Psalm sung its message of hope and faith! Into how many hearts, bruised and broken by grief, has it brought its hymn of comfort and healing! How many darkened prison cells it has lightened and cheered! Into what thousands of sickrooms has it brought its ministry of comfort and support! How many a time,

in the hour of pain, has it brought sustaining faith and sung its song of eternal bliss in the valley of the shadow of death! It has charmed more griefs to rest than all the philosophies of the world. And I am persuaded that this little Psalm-bird will continue to sing its song of comfort and cheer to your children, to my children, and to our children's children, and will not cease its psalmody of love until the last weary pilgrim has placed his last climbing footstep upon the threshold of the Father's house to go out no more. Then, I think, this little bird will fold its golden pinions and fall back on the bosom of God, from whence it came.

It has been well said that this Psalm is the most perfect picture of happiness that ever was or ever can be drawn to represent that state of mind for which all alike sigh, and the want of which makes life a failure to most. It represents that heaven which is everywhere, if we could but interpret it, and yet almost nowhere because not many of us do.

### Unusual Application

How familiar this Psalm is the world over! Go where you will; inquire in every nation, tongue and tribe under heaven where the Bible is known, you will find this Psalm among the first scriptures learned and lisped by the little child at its mother's knee, and the last bit of inspired Writ uttered in dying breath by the saintly patriarch.

This Psalm is so universal, says one, because it is so individual; it is so individual because it is so universal. As we read it, we are aware not only of the fact that we are listening to the experience of an Old Testament saint,



but also that a voice comes speaking to us through the long centuries past—speaking to us in our own language, recounting our own experience, breathing out our own hopes.

The Davidic authorship of this Psalm has been questioned. We believe firmly that David is the writer; and yet a man feels as he reads the Psalm that it is so personal, so true to his own individual experience, that he could fain claim to have written it himself. It might seem as though the promises and precious things set forth in this Psalm lie beyond our reach; we have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep, but “one of like passions with ourselves has passed that way before and has left a cup to be let down, with His name and story written on the rim, and we may let that cup down into the well and draw a draught of the deep, refreshing water.”

### **The Location of the Psalm**

Have you ever noticed just where this Psalm is located? It lies between the Twenty-second and the Twenty-fourth Psalms. A very simple statement that—but how deep and wondrous a lesson lies hidden therein!

The Twenty-second Psalm. What is it? It is “The Psalm of the Cross.” It begins with the words uttered by Christ on the cross: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” It ends with the exclamation of the cross: “He hath done it,” or, as it may be translated, “It is finished.” The Twenty-second Psalm, then, is the Psalm of Mount Calvary—the Psalm of the cross.

What is the Twenty-fourth Psalm? It is the Psalm of

Mount Zion—a picture of the King entering into His own. How beautifully it reads: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.” The Twenty-fourth Psalm, then, is the Psalm of the coming Kingdom of Glory.

There you have the two mountains; Mount Calvary and Mount Zion. What is it that lies between two mountains? A valley with its green grass, its quiet waters, its springing flowers, with shepherd and grazing sheep. Here, then, is the lesson we learn from the *location* of the Psalm: it is given to comfort, help, inspire and encourage God’s people during this probationary period of our life, between the cross and the crown.

Is not this the reason that the tenses of this Psalm are *present* tenses? “The LORD *is* my shepherd”; “He *maketh* me to lie down”; “He *leadeth me*.” Even the last verse, “*I will* [not I shall] dwell in the house of the Lord forever,” describes the *present* attitude of the soul of the Psalmist, who determines by no means to miss participation in the fellowship of the saints in heaven.

We love *the Christ of the cross*. We may not yet fully understand that cross; may not yet have found any particular theory of the atonement which completely satisfies our intellect. But we have learned to say that we believe in the atonement and in the vicarious death of our Redeemer. Somehow or other we have come, by faith, to throw our trembling arms around that bleeding body and cry out in the desperate determination of our sin-stricken

souls to Him who hangs on that cross to save us by His death. We have come to express our faith in that divine sacrifice in the words of the hymn:

Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.

Let us never forget that we reach the Twenty-third Psalm by the way of the Twenty-second Psalm—the Psalm of the cross. “The way of the cross leads home.” We love the Christ of the Twenty-second Psalm, the Christ of Calvary, the Christ of the cross.

We also love *the Christ of the throne and the glory*. It may be that at times we have trembled and feared as we have thought of the coming judgment; but when we have remembered that He who sits upon the throne is our Elder Brother, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; that He left His throne in the glory and took on Him the form of a servant, dying the ignominious death of the cross that He might redeem us and save us from the just wrath of God against sin; that some day, He who loved us and gave Himself for us will say: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”; then we take courage and look forward with joy to the time when, having washed the last sleep from our eyes in the river of life, we shall gaze with undimmed vision upon Him, whom having not seen, we have yet loved.

We love the Christ of the cross, the Christ of the past, the Christ of Mount Calvary. We love the Christ of the future, the Christ of the throne, the Christ of Mount Zion.

But more precious to us, and we say it reverently, than the Christ of the past, or the Christ of the future, is the Christ of the present; He who lives with us now, dwells within us, walks by our side every moment and every hour of the day. We used to sing in our childhood days that beautiful hymn,

I think, when I read that sweet story of old,  
When Jesus was here among men,  
How He called little children as lambs to His fold,  
I should like to have been with Him then.

I wish that His hands had been placed on my head,  
That His arms had been thrown around me;  
And that I might have seen His kind look when He  
said,  
"Let the little ones come unto me."

—*Mrs. Jemima Luke*

Many of us feel that we would have given anything to have walked by the side of the Christ in the days of His earthly pilgrimage, and we almost envy those who saw His face in the flesh. Some of us know the thrill of joy that came to our hearts when we trod the sands of Galilee that once were fresh with His footprints, trod the Temple's marble pavements that once echoed with His tread, and sailed the blue waters of Galilee that once were stilled by His wonderful word.

And yet, we should not forget that the enjoyment of the real presence of Christ is just as truly ours today as it was the possession of the disciples in the days of His flesh. As the old hymn so beautifully says,



We may not climb the heavenly steeps  
To bring the Lord Christ down;  
In vain we search the lowest deeps,  
For Him no depths can drown.

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet  
A present help is He;  
And faith has still its Olivet,  
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress  
Is by our beds of pain;  
We touch Him in life's throng and press,  
And we are whole again.

—*John G. Whittier*

The name given to our Lord in connection with His birth was Immanuel, which being interpreted is "God with us." One of the most beautiful doctrines of the Christian faith is the divine immanence, the continued presence of the ever-living Christ with His people; for

For God is never so far off as even to be near, He  
is within.

—*F. W. Faber*

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands  
or feet.

—*Alfred Tennyson*

I know not where His islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air;  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care.

—*John G. Whittier*



## CHAPTER ONE

**The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

**T**HE LORD is my shepherd." Have you ever noted how the word "Lord" is printed in the Bible? Sometimes all the letters are large capitals (LORD); or the first letter is a large capital and the other letters smaller capitals (LORD); then, again, the first letter is a large capital and the remaining letters ordinary (Lord). Each method of spelling the divine name indicates a different phase of the character of God. "LORD" refers to Jehovah as the covenant-keeping God, the One who never fails to fulfill all His promises. "LORD" points to our Lord Jesus Christ as the second Person in the Trinity, He who became incarnate. "Lord" signifies also God in Christ, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, God of power, the One who is able to do all things and with whom nothing is impossible, manifesting Himself in Jesus Christ.

What a world of meaning, then, lies wrapped up in the word "LORD" in the first verse of this Psalm! Jehovah who is all-faithful, never failing in His promises, almighty, all-powerful, who is able to supply all of our needs, who created the heavens and the earth, who upholds all things by the word of His power, who spake and it was done, who commanded and it stood fast; the LORD of whom Job

said: "I know that thou canst do anything, and no purpose of thine can be hindered"; the "LORD" who never fails in the keeping of His promises, however seemingly impossible of fulfillment, from a natural viewpoint, those promises may be; the "LORD" of whom it is said, "God is not a man that he should lie, nor the Son of man that he should repent." "Hath he said and shall he not do it; hath he promised and shall he not bring it to pass?" the "Lord," the incarnate One, who for our sakes took on Himself our nature with all its sinful infirmities, who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, and who is thus able to feel our needs and sympathize with us in all our trials and temptations; the "LORD" who, speaking to the multitudes, said, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep"—such a Shepherd, faithful, powerful, sympathetic, is our "LORD." What a wealth of meaning, then, lies in the first clause, "The LORD" (who is LORD, and Lord)—such a "LORD" is "my Shepherd."

We can then well say, "I shall not want." With such a Shepherd, how could we want for anything for time or eternity? All that we need for body, mind and soul shall be supplied. The God who provided the table in the wilderness, who fed Elijah by the brook, who struck the rock in the wilderness that the thirst of His people might be quenched, will provide for His children according to His riches in glory.

Reviewing Israel's history in the wilderness it could be recorded, "These forty years Jehovah, thy God, hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing." How wonderfully God supplied the needs of His people when they were traveling through that long, weary wilderness! "For the



LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand; he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness; these forty years the LORD thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing" (Deut. 2:7). "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not" (Neh. 9:20, 21).

Let us, then, as the children of God, take all the comfort possible out of these words. Let us not go about mourning, grumbling, and borrowing trouble, thereby proclaiming to the world that our great Banker is on the verge of bankruptcy. The "LORD" is our shepherd; we shall not want for nourishment (v. 1), refreshment (v. 2), rest (v. 3), protection (v. 4), guidance (v. 5), home (v. 6). Here is a bank the child of God can draw on at any time without fear of its being broken. Millions have been supplied and there's room for millions more. No want shall turn me back from following the Shepherd.

How encouraging to recall the words of Jesus uttered to the disciples when they had returned from their itinerary of missionary activity: "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing" (Luke 22:35).

The Lord my Shepherd is,  
I shall be well supplied,  
Since He is mine and I am His,  
What can I want beside?

—Isaac Watts

When the writer was a lad he secured a position for which he was promised so much a week in money and "everything found," by which was meant board, room, and clothing. So this verse may read, "The LORD is my Shepherd," and "everything found."

In a park one day two women were overheard talking. One of them, who by her appearance showed that she was in very straitened circumstances, said to the other, "I am at my wit's end; I know not what to do. My husband has been sick and unable to work for almost a year. What little money we had saved is all spent. We have not a penny with which to buy food or clothing for ourselves or the children. This morning we received notice from the landlord to vacate." And then, in words that were full of suggestive meaning, she added, "If John D. Rockefeller were my father, I would not want, would I?"

Oh, what a world of comfort lies in the thought, "The LORD is my Shepherd," and therefore, "I shall not want"! I shall want for nothing in time or eternity. Every need of body, mind, and soul shall be supplied. In the great Shepherd lies strength for my weakness, hope for my despair, food for my hunger, satisfaction for my need, wisdom for my ignorance, healing for my wounds, power for my temptation—the complement of all my lack.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;  
More than all in thee I find.

—Charles Wesley

### Religion Is a Personal Thing

"The LORD is my shepherd." *My Shepherd.* Religion is a *personal* thing. Really speaking, your religion consists in

your personal relationship to God in Jesus Christ. Not mere profession, but actual possession is what counts. Christianity emphasizes the worth of the individual and his personal relation to God. Sin degrades men into mere numbers.

A photograph was placed on my desk. It had inscribed on it a number, but no name. It was the likeness of a convict. It was a number I went to jail to see; a number I spoke with by the cell door; a number I stood by and saw handcuffed; a number with whom I walked down the steps of the jail; a number with whom I walked up the stairs to the scaffold; a number around whose neck I saw the rope placed; a number I saw drop to his death. Sin degrades personality, but the religion of Christ exalts its adherents to a place in that innumerable company which cannot be numbered, but every one of whom bears upon his forehead the name of his Redeemer and King. Jesus calleth His sheep by name, not by number.

At the close of a sermon in a church in the Highlands of Scotland the preacher, who was supplying the pulpit for a few Sundays, was asked to call upon a shepherd boy who was very sick. Arm in arm with one of the elders of the church the minister crossed the moor, climbed the hillside, and came to the cottage where the boy and his widowed mother lived. After knocking at the door the visitors were admitted by the mother. Her face showed the marks of long vigil. The boy was her only child. The minister and elder went into the room where the sick boy lay on his cot. The minister, looking upon the pale, haggard face of the sick shepherd boy, asked him tenderly, "Laddie, do you know the Twenty-third Psalm?"

Every Scotch boy knows the Twenty-third Psalm, and so the little fellow replied, "Yes, sir, I ken [know] the Psalm well."

"Will you repeat it to me?" said the minister to the boy.

Slowly and tenderly the lad quoted the words, "The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want," unto the end of the Psalm.

"Don't you see," said the minister to the boy, "that in the first clause of the first verse there is just one word for each finger. Hold up your hand, laddie; take the second finger of your right hand, put it on the fourth finger of your left, hold it over your heart and say with me, 'The LORD is *my* Shepherd.'"

The fourth finger of the left hand! Why that finger? Every woman knows. It is the ring finger. Who placed that ring on your finger? My friend, my lover, my husband; the man who is more to me and different to me than any other and all other men in this world; the man without whom life would not be worth living; *my* friend, *my* lover, *my* husband.

The following Sunday the elder and the minister again crossed the moor and came to the cottage on the hillside. As the mother opened the door to admit them they saw by the expression on her face that a deeper sorrow had fallen on her heart since they last saw her. She took them, silently and solemnly, into a little room, and there, covered with a snow-white sheet, lay the lifeless form of the shepherd laddie, her only child. As the minister took the white sheet and passed it from forehead to chin, from chin to breast, and from breast to waist, he saw, frozen stiff in death, the second finger of the right hand on the



fourth of the left hand, which was fastened in death over his heart. The mother exclaimed amid her tears, "He died saying, 'The LORD is *my* Shepherd.'"

What a world of difference that little word *my* makes, does it not? As a pastor I have often stood by the open grave that was to receive the body of someone's beloved daughter, the light and joy of some heart. I sought to be deeply sympathetic with those who were suffering bereavement. I tried to mourn with those who mourned, and weep with those who wept, and I think I did, so far as it is possible for a friend to sympathize. But one day I stood by an open grave when *my* daughter, *my* child, *my own* darling girl, *my* Dorothy, was placed beneath the sod. Ah! then I knew what grief was. Ah, what a world of difference that little word *my* makes!

It will not profit you much, my friend, to be able to say, "The LORD is *a* Shepherd"; you must be more personal; you must say, "The LORD is *my* Shepherd."

A Shepherd who giveth His life for the sheep,  
A Shepherd both mighty to save and to keep—  
Yes, this is the Shepherd, the Shepherd we need,  
And He is a Shepherd indeed!  
Is He yours? Is He yours?  
Is this Shepherd, who loves you, *yours*?

—Ada R. Habershon

## CHAPTER TWO

**He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.**

**T**HEY tell us that it is a very difficult and well-nigh impossible thing to get a sheep that is hungry to lie down in a pasture, or that is thirsty to drink by turbulent waters. A hungry dog will, but not a hungry sheep. The sheep described in this verse, then, are such as have been fed and satisfied in richest pastures, and whose thirst have been slaked in quiet waters. Doubtless the mind of the Psalmist is going back to such scenes in his own shepherd life when he had led his flock into rich, green pastures, sought out for his sheep some quiet watering-place, or had so manipulated the flow of turbulent waters as to make them flow smoothly.

The writer of this Psalm is seeking to illustrate spiritual truths from his own experience as a shepherd among the hills of Judea. He is spiritualizing his soliloquy. He thinks of the cry of God's people for the satisfaction of the soul's hunger and thirst; he sees the necessity for such feeding and nourishment if there is to be a walk of obedience "in the paths of righteousness."

Spiritualizing this verse, we may say that the "green pastures" and "still waters" refer to the spiritual nourishment which the child of God receives as he waits upon God

in the study of His Word and prayer. There can be no spiritual strength sufficient to walk in "paths of righteousness" unless time is taken to "lie down" in the "green pastures" of the divine Word by "the still waters" of prayer. To "lie down" is the first lesson the Great Shepherd would teach His sheep. Not lie down after you are tired, but before. "Lie down" that you may have strength to walk in "the paths of righteousness." One of the hardest commands for the soldier to obey is to wait in the trenches. He would sooner "go over the top."

It is generally recognized as being a very difficult thing to get God's people to thus "lie down." They will do almost anything and everything else but that. They will run, walk, fight, sing, teach, preach, work—in a word, do almost anything and everything except seek seasons of quiet and periods of retirement for secret communion with God and quiet soul nurture.

Most of our favorite hymns indicate this attitude. They are militant, working, active hymns: "Work, for the night is coming"; "The fight is on"; "Onward, Christian Soldiers, marching as to war"; "Stand up, stand up for Jesus"; "Steadily marching on, with His banner waving o'er us," and many others. Where are such hymns as "Alone with Jesus, O the hush, the rapture"; "In the secret of His presence how my soul delights to hide"; "Take time to be holy"? How few of us are willing to go alone into the woods "whither the Master went, clean forspent, clean forspent"!

We do not like pauses in our meetings. If there should be a pause we seek at once to fill it in with a verse of Scripture, or someone says, "Let us sing a verse of hymn

sixty-six," and so we fill up the pauses with choruses.

From the rush into the hush Jesus call us. From the turbulent tumult into the quiet secret of His presence. Where there is peace, perfect peace, Jesus call us.

Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult  
Of our life's wild, restless sea;  
Day by day His sweet voice soundeth,  
Saying, "Christian, follow me!"

Jesus calls us—from the worship  
Of the vain world's golden store;  
From each idol that would keep us—  
Saying, "Christian, love me more!"

In our joys and in our sorrows,  
Days of toil and hours of ease,  
Still He calls in cares and pleasures—  
"Christian, love me more than these!"

Jesus calls us! by Thy mercies,  
Saviour, may we hear Thy call;  
Give our hearts to Thy obedience,  
Serve and love Thee best of all.

—Cecil F. Alexander

Lie down we *must*. The text says, "He *maketh* me to lie down." The word "maketh" is the Hebrew causative and indicates forcible, compelling action. Our great Shepherd knows that amid the activity, the stress, the strain and the restlessness of our lives it is absolutely necessary for us to take periods of quiet and rest, without which it will be impossible for us to continue in the way of righteousness. Have you so much to do that you do not have

time to "lie down"? Then the gracious Shepherd will see to it that you have less to do. He would *make* you lie down. The overworked watchspring snaps. There must be pauses and parentheses in all our lives.

We make much today of *active* Christianity. We lay emphasis on the *activities* of Church work. Pragmatism is more than quietism to us. We must "bring things to pass," and "deliver the goods." This is all very well in its place, but we fear that the strength of our activities is not very deeply rooted. We shall be able to bear fruit upward and outward only as the roots of our spiritual life grow downward and deep. The secret springs of our lives must be well cared for.

One day we read in the daily newspaper of some leading man in the community who had fallen and brought discredit on the cause of Christ. This unfaithful one was described as having been "an active member of the church." Yes, that was the trouble. He was too active; he was not passive enough. He had omitted to "lie down" and feed in "green pastures" and drink by the "still waters" of God's Word and by prayer.

A friend tells us that while in the Orient he visited a Syrian shepherd. He observed that every morning the shepherd carried food to the sheepfold. On inquiry he found that he was taking it to a sick sheep. The next morning the friend accompanied the shepherd and saw in the sheepfold a sheep with a broken leg. The friend asked the shepherd how the accident happened. Was it struck by a stone? Did it fall into a hole? Did a dog bite it? How was the limb injured? The shepherd replied, "No, I broke it myself."

*does our leg need to be removed?*



In amazement the friend replied, "What, you broke it! Why did you do that?"

The shepherd then told him how wayward this sheep had been, how it had led others astray, and how difficult it had been to come near it. It was necessary that something should be done to preserve the life of this particular member of the flock, and also to prevent it from leading other sheep astray. The shepherd therefore broke its leg and reset it. This breakage necessitated the sheep's *lying down* for a week or more. During that time it was compelled to take food from the hand of the shepherd. Thus had the compulsion of lying down cured the wandering and wayward disposition of the sheep.

It is said that when a sheep will not follow the shepherd he takes up the lamb in his arms—and then the mother follows.

So it sometimes happens with the children of God. Our Great Shepherd has to lay us aside, put us on our backs, perhaps, for a while in order that we may look up into His face and learn needed lessons. A little girl lay dying. She looked up into the face of her father, who years before had been a very active church worker, but on account of business prosperity had drifted away from Christian moorings, and said, "Papa, if you were as good as you used to be, do you think I would have to die?" God was *making* this man to "lie down," do you see?

A deacon in a Baptist church told me this story. When first married, he and his wife observed family prayers every day. This worshipful spirit continued for some years after their first child was born; then gradually the father became so engrossed in business that the family altar, Bible reading

and prayer were gradually neglected and finally altogether dispensed with. One day, on coming home from the office, the deacon found his nine-year-old girl very ill with a fever. For weeks they watched over her, but finally the angel of death took her home. As the deacon told me this story, the tears filling his eyes, he said, "Then I knew that my daughter had been taken for my sake and that God was *making* me to 'lie down.' From that day until this, which is over a quarter of a century, the family altar has been maintained in our home."

Mother, in that sweetest of all hours to a mother, the last hour of the day when the child is being put to sleep, when the last thing its eyes rest upon is the face of the mother, does its last vision rest on a mother who has taught it to pray, to love Jesus? It would be infinitely better that the heavenly Father take that little child to be with Himself than that it should go out into the world from a godless, Christless, prayerless home.

Fathers and mothers, are we taking time to "lie down," to be alone with God in prayer and the reading of His Word? Has the family altar in your home been neglected? What are you waiting for? Do you want God to come and lay His hand upon some precious one in your family circle to take to be with Himself? Would you then take time to "lie down"?

It is said that when a sheep is wayward and will not cross the brook, the shepherd finds that by taking the little lamb from it and carrying it across, the mother sheep will at once follow, rushing over the stream. Fathers and mothers, are you waiting for God to do this? Our fathers and mothers used to have the family altar. They took

time to read the Bible and pray with their children. What kind of age will the next be if we neglect these religious privileges? It may be that our parents were not the scholars that some of their children are, but I think we may safely say that they were the saints that we never will be until we "lie down" in the green pastures and quiet waters of God's Word and prayer as they did.

Christian workers especially need to learn the lesson of "lying down." We are restless; we fume and worry and fret because we are tired and hungry. We do not take time to "lie down." Strange, is it not, that we will do almost anything but lie down? We will walk, run, climb, sing, preach, teach—do anything but "lie down." Let us not forget that the secret of power lies in being alone with God. Christ *drew* the multitudes to Him because He *withdrew* from them at times. The drawing preacher is the withdrawing man. Significant are the words of Jesus to His *active* disciples: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while."

Resting in the pastures and beneath the Rock,  
Resting by the waters where He leads His flock,  
Resting, while we listen, at His glorious feet,  
Resting in His very arms! O rest complete!

—Frances Ridley Havergal

These seasons of lying down are periods of renewal of strength for duty, not for indolence or mere ecstasy. By thus feeding in the green pastures and drinking by the still waters, we are strengthened in order that we may walk in the paths of righteousness. We eat and drink for strength,

not for drunkenness. One may lie in a bath so long that his strength is exhausted thereby, or he may take a good plunge in the morning which will be a source of exhilaration to him throughout the day. These times of "lying down" may be likened to the plunge. We must not be mere recluses or visionaries. Our "lying down" must fit us for "walking." If our private communion with God does not fit us for Christian activity in our daily avocation, distrust it. We cannot keep the rapture of devotion if we neglect duty of service. Life must not be all contemplation any more than it must not be all activity. We will not need to speak of these times of lying down, nor advertise that we have seasons of quiet communion, of ecstasy and vision; but the result thereof will be clearly apparent in our lives as we walk in the path of righteousness, and in the joyful assurance of soul when we are called upon to pass through the valley of the shadow.

Would that we knew how much depended, both for ourselves and others, on these seasons of retirement for meditation and prayer! What a blessing it would be to us! What a benediction to others!

Lord, what a change within us one short hour  
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make;  
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take;  
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!  
We kneel, and all around us seem to lower;  
We rise, and all the distant and the near  
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;  
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!

Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong—  
Or others—that we are not always strong;  
That we are ever overborne with care;  
That we should ever weak or heartless be,  
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,  
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee!

—*Richard Chenevix Trench*



## CHAPTER THREE

He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

**D**AVID, the shepherd Psalmist, is doubtless thinking of the refreshment that comes to the soul from browsing or meditating in the green pastures and by the still waters of the Word of God, and of the exhilaration and inspiration that comes from being alone with God with an open Bible and on bended knee. Every true child of God knows the strength and blessing that comes from such fellowship and communion. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:30, 31).

But the Psalmist is referring more particularly, perhaps, to the restoration of the soul from a spiritual lapse or backsliding, resulting from failure to "lie down." We well know from what we have read regarding the Oriental shepherd life, that the shepherd must needs be a physician as well as a guide. A sheep is a most defenseless creature. A cat, horse, cow or a dog will defend itself—a sheep cannot. Sheep have a genius for going wrong. A sheep

is said to have less brains than any other animal of its size. If lost, it cannot find its way back unaided. A dog, a cat, a horse can, but not a sheep. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray." If the Good Shepherd had not gone after us we would not have been in the fold today.

Have you ever looked into a sheep's eyes? They look for all the world like glass eyes. A sheep can see practically nothing beyond ten or fifteen yards. It recognizes persons by sound and not by sight. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice; a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers."

### Traps for Falling

Palestinian fields were covered with narrow criss-cross paths over which the shepherd would have to lead his flock in seeking new pasture. Some of these paths led to a precipice or deep ravine over which a stupid sheep might easily fall to its death. From such dangers the shepherd had to guard his flock. Some sheep, however, being wayward by nature would take one of these criss-cross paths leading to danger and fall headlong into thickets or down ravines, where they would lie wounded, bleeding and dying. What does a stupid sheep know of ravines, precipices or haunts of wild beasts? That hill or valley seems to offer fair prospects and good pasture—but death lurks there. The sheep knows not. The shepherd would have to seek the lost, wounded sheep, and, finding it, bind up its wounds, reset broken limbs and restore its health.

It is said that if a sheep wandered into a stranger's pasture the finder could cut its throat and keep the carcass, providing the shepherd did not come in time to save the

sheep. Many times the shepherd arrived just after the sheep had been mutilated, and by care saved its life and restored it to health again. The sheep was again his own—it was “restored.”

### The Wandering Sheep

David is spiritually soliloquizing. He thinks of the tendency of human nature to err and stray like a sheep. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” Man, too, has a genius for going wrong. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” No man is clever enough to guide himself through the devious ways of life. He needs God as a guide.

David recalls how tenderly God had dealt with him after his backslidings and how graciously and completely He had restored him to fellowship.

How gently Christ deals with the backslider! When John the Baptist temporarily wavered in his conception of the mission of the Christ, and sent his disciples to Jesus to ask, “Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?” how tenderly Christ dealt with His forerunner! The circumstances in the case might have led us to expect harsh treatment. John had seen the open heavens and heard the voice of God saying, “This is my beloved Son.” In a special and miraculous way it had been revealed to John that Jesus was the Messiah, “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” The people had looked upon John as a prophet. All that he had said concerning the Christ they had believed, and now from the forerunner of Christ comes this message of doubt repeated to Jesus

within the hearing of the multitudes. But that child of the desert had been incarcerated for some time in a narrow prison cell. No wonder the eyes of the caged eagle began to film, and the faith of the stern prophet began to waver. Other great men have wavered in their faith before John. David himself said, even though God had definitely promised that he should succeed Saul as king, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." Elijah, after his great triumph over the four hundred prophets of Baal, sat down under a juniper tree, and full of fear because of Jezebel's threat asked disconsolately that he might die. No wonder then that, momentarily, the faith of John the Baptist was in the shadow. You and I have failed in faith amid circumstances less trying than those which surrounded John the Baptist in his dungeon.

### The Gentleness of the Shepherd

How does Jesus answer John? Does He curse the doubter? No. That would not be like Him. He has never been known to do that. Not once, so far as we know, did He ever send a message of censure to a soul in the dungeon of darkness, doubt, and despair. We have seen Him blast, with the lightning of His eloquence, the false pride of scribe and Pharisee who stood before Him in haughtiness and scorn, but we never knew Him to say a harsh word to a creature that was sore stricken in soul. No, "He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." No, He will not send a curse; He will send a blessing. That will be more like Him. He will say, "Go tell John again those things that ye do see and hear; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are

raised, the poor are evangelized, and *blessed* is he that shall not be offended in me." Not a curse, but a blessing will He send.

How much like His treatment of us! Do we not remember when we first came to Him as our Saviour, how He forgave, freely and gladly, all our sins, and sent us on our way rejoicing? Do we not recall how shortly after, when we had sinned and spotted the clean white sheet of paper He had given us, that when we brought it back to Him all spotted with sin He freely pardoned, gave us another clean sheet, and, without upbraiding, sent us away, saying, "Thy sins are forgiven; sin no more"? Yes, we recall it. We believe in the deity of Christ, not because of the metaphysical arguments that have been produced to prove it, no matter how elaborately stated or eloquently discussed; not because our library shelves are groaning beneath the weight of evidences of His deity; nor because theologians are said to have forced Him to that high eminence. We believe Jesus Christ to be God because when we sinned and came asking pardon He freely forgave, and gave us a clean sheet of acquittal, saying, "Thy sins are forgiven; go and sin no more"; and then when we did sin again and brought back the sheet of paper all blotted over with sin and said we were sorry and again asked pardon, He freely forgave, and without chiding sent us on our way rejoicing. That is what makes us believe in Him as the Son of God and love Him with a love surpassing expression.

Poor wandering soul, have you fallen by the wayside? Have you become a wayward sheep? Have you wandered from the fold? Are you tossed about, wounded, sick and



sore? Do you desire to come back again to the Shepherd's care? Come now, right now, while the throb of passion is still beating high, while the deed of shame is recent; while the blot of sin is still wet; come now; say,

With all the shame, with all the keen distress,  
Quick, "waiting not," I flee to Thee again;  
Close to the wound, beloved Lord, I press,  
That Thine own precious blood may overflow the  
stain.

O precious blood, Lord, let it rest on me!  
I ask not only pardon from my King,  
But cleansing from my Priest, I come to Thee,  
Just as I came at first—a sinful, helpless thing.

Oh, cleanse me now, my Lord, I cannot stay  
For evening shadows and a silent hour:  
Now I have sinned, and now with no delay,  
I claim Thy promise and its total power.

O Saviour, bid me go and sin no more,  
And keep me always 'neath the mighty flow  
Of Thy perpetual fountain, I implore  
That Thy perpetual cleansing I may fully know.

—*Frances Ridley Havergal*

O wandering sheep, backslidden soul, may the Saviour find you today, put His strong arms round about you, bring you back again into the fold, keep you from wandering, teach you all you need to know, until the gloaming, until after having washed the last sleep from your eyes in the river of life, you place your last climbing footstep on the threshold of our Father's house to go out no more.

Callest Thou thus, O Master, callest Thou thus to me?  
I am weary and heavy laden, and longing to come  
to Thee;

And out in the distant darkness Thy dear voice  
sounds so sweet,

But I am not worthy, not worthy, O Master, to kiss  
Thy feet.

"Child!" said the gracious Master, "why turnest thou  
thus away,

When I came through the darkness seeking my sheep  
that have gone astray?

I know thou art heavy laden, I know thou hast need  
of me

And the feet of thy loving Master are weary with  
seeking thee."

Callest Thou thus, O Master, callest Thou thus to  
me?

When my untrimmed lamp is dying and my heart is  
not meet for Thee;

For Thou art so great and holy, and mine is so poor  
a home,

And I am not worthy, not worthy, O Master, that  
Thou shouldest come.

"Child," said the tender Shepherd—and His voice was  
very sweet—

"I only ask for a welcome, and rest for my weary  
feet."

Then over my lonely threshold, though weak and  
defiled by sin,

Though I am not worthy, O Master, I pray Thee  
enter in.

—*Helen Marion Burnsides*

## Christ the Restorer

Do I not speak to a soul who once has known Christ as the Good Shepherd, but has now wandered away from the fold?

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,  
But yet in love He sought me,  
And on His shoulders gently laid,  
He home rejoicing brought me.

—Sir Henry W. Baker

May I not remind you of the Master's own parable, "What man of you, having one hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which has gone astray, until he find it?" May I impress upon you the words *until he find it*? He will not cease the search until He has found the sheep. It has been said that the first verse of this Psalm may be translated, "The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not be *missing*." "O love that will not let go."

The shepherd stands at the door of the sheepfold and counts the sheep, his one hundred sheep. He counts to ninety-nine. One is missing. He cannot rest until that last one is found. The door of the sheepfold is closed, and out into the darkness and cold and pain of the night the shepherd goes until he finds his lost sheep, and on his shoulders he carries it back to the fold, then calls upon his neighbors to rejoice with him. He has found his lost sheep.

There were ninety and nine that safely lay  
In the shelter of the fold,  
But one was out on the hills away,  
Far off from the gates of gold—  
Away on the mountains wild and bare,  
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

Lord, Thou hast here Thy ninety and nine;  
Are they not enough for Thee?  
But the Shepherd made answer, "This of mine  
Has wandered away from me,  
And although the road be rough and steep,  
I go to the desert to find my sheep."

But none of the ransomed ever knew  
How deep were the waters crossed,  
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed  
through  
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.  
Out in the desert He heard its cry—  
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

Lord, whence are those blood-drops all the way  
That mark out the mountain's track?  
They were shed for one who had gone astray  
Ere the Shepherd could bring him back.  
Lord, whence are Thy hands so rent and torn?  
They are pierced tonight by many a thorn.

But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,  
And up from the rocky steep,  
There arose a glad cry to the gates of heaven,  
Rejoice! I have found my sheep!  
And the angels echoed around the throne,  
Rejoice, for the LORD brings back His own!

—Elizabeth C. Clephane

### "The Paths of Righteousness"

"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

These words are strikingly significant, and show forth the tender aspect of God's guidance. Ofttimes, after rain, the heavy wagon wheels would leave deep ruts in the road, which in cold weather would become hardened and make it difficult for the sheep to walk. Not such roads did the true shepherd willingly choose for his sheep. If compelled, however, to take such roads, he would choose those that had been flattened down by wagon wheels until level. He chose those roads that had been worn smooth, that the tender feet of the sheep might not be bruised. "He leadeth me in smooth roads." "Thou didst sustain them in the wilderness; their feet swelled not."

He who follows the divine leading will always be led aright. His feet will travel in "right roads." No man will go wrong who follows Christ. He never leads the soul into questionable places, and no feet guided by Him will go into any place where He Himself does not go. "Where I am, there shall my servant be." "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." Sometimes the road He chooses may not be after our liking, but it will always be for our best interest, welfare and usefulness. This fact will eventually be made clear to us, and we will gladly go with Him all the way.

I said, "Let me walk in the fields,"

He said, "No, walk in the town,"



I said, "There are no flowers there,"  
He said, "No flowers, but a crown."

I said, "But the skies are black;  
There is nothing but noise and din,"  
But He wept as He sent me back—  
"There is more," He said, "there is sin."

I said, "But the air is thick,  
And fogs are veiling the sun,"  
He answered, "Yet souls are sick,  
And souls in the dark, undone."

I said, "I shall miss the light,  
And friends will miss me, they say."  
He answered: "Choose tonight  
If I am to miss you or they."

I pleaded for time to be given.  
He said, "It is hard to decide?  
It will not seem hard in heaven,  
To have followed the steps of your guide."

I cast one look at the fields,  
Then set my face to the town.  
He said, "My child, do you yield?  
Will you leave the flowers for the crown?"

Then into His hand went mine,  
And into my heart came He;  
And I walk in a light divine,  
The paths I had feared to see.

—George Macdonald

### "His Name's Sake"

All this He does for His name's sake. How beautiful those words are, "*for his name's sake*." Christ's own glory

is involved in the security and care of His children. The physician cares for your child who is sick unto death, for your sake, it is true, but for "his own name's sake" as well. To lose your child would hurt his reputation and practice. The lawyer protects his client for his client's sake, it is true, but also, and perhaps more so, for "his own name's sake." To lose the case would be to hurt his standing in the legal profession. The pilot guides the ship safely into harbor for the passengers' sake, it is true, but more particularly for "his own name's sake," for to lose the ship would be to lose his license.

We remember that Jesus said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." He also said, "And of all that thou hast given me, I have lost none." Christ Himself is the door. His broad figure and bulk fills it. Who shall strip Him of His power, or rob Him of His sheep? He is the secret of the security of the believer; yea, He is the security itself. We are hid in Him. It is rather the perseverance of the Christ than of the believer. Here, then, is the security of the believer, saved and kept for "His own name's sake."

How proud we are of someone who is named after us! We have more solicitude and care for the child that carries our name than for other children. *For His name's sake*, therefore, is an indication of the intense, intimate interest and care of the Christ for His people. Do we recall what Moses said to Jehovah when He said He thought to destroy the people of Israel? Did not Moses plead thus with God, "If thou dost destroy them, what

shall we say to the nations, and what wilt thou do for thine own name's sake?"

Shall it not be that in that great day not one of Christ's sheep will be missing? "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." "The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not be missing."

Christ Jesus hath the power,  
The power to renew,  
The power to cleanse your heart from sin,  
And make you wholly true.  
Christ Jesus hath the power  
For evermore to keep;  
Oh, none can pluck you from His hand,  
Or rob Him of His sheep!

—James M. Gray

### God as a Guide

What a wonderful truth is asserted in this verse—"He leadeth *me*." Meditate just a moment on these words—"He," God, the great and mighty One, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the One who upholdeth all things by the word of His power, the unerring, unchangeable, all-seeing, all-knowing, all-powerful One—"He leadeth *me*"—*me*, poor, trembling, wayward, straying, sinning, fallible, erring son of Adam, unworthy, unfit, not entitled to the least of God's blessings; yet, incomprehensible as the truth may seem, God in heaven leads "*me*" here, on

earth. He leadeth me on a journey in which it is so easy of myself to go astray from the right path. Further, He *leads*, not drives, His sheep. "He goeth *before* His own sheep and leadeth them." The Good Shepherd will not ask you to go anywhere where He Himself has not gone. He does not drive His children. He leads them.

He leadeth me! Oh! blessed thought,  
Oh, words with heav'nly comfort fraught!  
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,  
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,  
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,  
By waters calm, o'er troubled sea—  
Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me.

Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine,  
Nor ever murmur nor repine;  
Content, whatever lot I see,  
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.  
And when my task on earth is done,  
When, by Thy grace, the vict'ry's won,  
E'en death's cold wave I will not flee,  
Since God through Jordan leadeth me.

He leadeth me! He leadeth me!  
By His own hand He leadeth me;  
His faithful foll'wer I would be,  
For by His hand He leadeth me.

—Joseph H. Gilmore

### Knowing God's Will

God's way of guidance varies with different individuals.

There is probably no point on which we need more careful instruction than that which concerns the will of God for us. We may speak of two wills of God. The first concerns our character and may be known by all, for it is distinctly declared in the Word of God in such passages, for example, as, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." There can be no doubt or hesitancy with regard to knowing what the *general* will of God regarding our *character* may be.

There is another will of God, however, which affects not our character but our *career*. This *particular* will of God is not as easy to discern as that which touches our character. Others may not know this for me. In the last analysis God and I alone must solve the problem of my career. It is true I may consult others and get all the light possible on the question at issue, but ultimately the solution of the matter is to be found in the quiet with the soul and God Himself.

### Three Things about Guidance

Three things may be said to indicate clearly the *particular* will of God which concerns my *career*.

The first comes from a constant and prayerful reading of the *Word of God*, through which God will in some way make known to me in particular His will regarding me. The scripture which decides the matter for me may not have the same meaning to others, but I recognize it to be God's will for me. A minister received one day two calls to the pastorate of two churches. One offered a stipend of three thousand dollars a year and manse, and an established church with nine hundred members, and located under

the shadow of a great university. A flattering call indeed. The other invitation was from a struggling suburban church with a membership of seventy-five, and offering a salary of one thousand eight hundred dollars a year. What should the minister do? Which call should he accept? To say there was no struggle in the heart at the time would be to belie the fact. The man of God took the two invitations, laid them on the bed, knelt by its side, and put his open Bible in front of him between the two letters. After prayer for guidance and after reading the Word for some time his attention was riveted upon this verse: "Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to them that are lowly" (Rom. 12:16, R. V.). He had read that verse before, many times, but somehow he could not get beyond it at *this* time. To *him* at *that particular time* it was indicative of God's will. Obediently he chose the smaller church. After years proved the wisdom of the choice. So God will in some way indicate to you through the reading of His Word His will for *you* at *that time*.

The second element in discerning the will of God is what may be called *the inward impression*, by which we mean the constant, irrepressible, insistent, persistent conviction in the heart of the child of God that he ought to do thus and so in a given case. It often happens that a strong impulse comes to a child of God. In a day or two that impulse has passed away, and he looks back and sees that he has no assurance that such was the will of God for him; but to the obedient soul in communion with the heavenly Father, the constant, irrepressible, insistent and persistent conviction that a certain thing should or should



not be done is one of the sure indications of God's voice in the soul.

The third feature in discerning the will of God is what may be called *the favorable circumstance*, or *the open door*. If God wants one to go to a certain place or do a certain thing, the opportunity to do it will be present with the call to do it. If it is not, then one should wait until the door opens. If the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night remains stationary, then Israel must remain in the camp. When these emblems of God's guidance lifted and moved, then Israel knew that it was time for them to move.

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still  
Will lead me on  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till  
The night is gone;  
And with the morn those angels faces smile  
Which I have loved long since and lost awhile.

—John H. Newman

These three things, the Word of God, the inward impression, and the open door, should be present in every clear indication of the will of God. If any one of them is missing, it indicates that the will of God is not yet clear. We have a beautiful illustration of these three things in the call of Peter to admit Cornelius into the Church (Acts 10 and 11). First, Peter had the *Word of God*—nothing should be regarded common or unclean; second, he had *the inward impression*—he was meditating on what the vision he had seen should mean; and third, there was

*the open door*—three men were already waiting for him to convey him to Cæsarea.

Wonderfully instructive is God's guidance of the children of Israel by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. In this connection we should recall the words of Jesus when in the Temple, at the time they were celebrating God's care for His people in the wilderness in providing them with the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. He said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Christ is our Guide; the Word of God is our chart. Having them, we may rest assured that God who has guided His people in all the ages will guide us safely to the end.

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,  
Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,  
Hold me with Thy powerful hand;  
Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain  
Whence the healing steam doth flow;  
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar  
Lead me all my journey through;  
Strong Deliv'rer, be Thou still my Strength and  
Shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
Bid my anxious fears subside,  
Bear me through the swelling current,  
Land me safe on Canaan's side:  
Songs of praises I will ever give to Thee.

—William Williams

## CHAPTER FOUR

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

IT was necessary for shepherds in Palestine, when leading their flocks from one pasture to another, to lead them at times through dark ravines, on either side of which were caves and holes wherein dwelt ravenous beasts. From the attack of these beasts the shepherd must protect his flock. For this purpose he used the staff which he carried with him. The staff was a great stick with a large knob at the end of it pierced through with sharp nails and spikes. This weapon was used to beat off the attacks of the wild beasts. The shepherd must be bold and courageous. We recall how David referred to his encounters with wild beasts which attacked his flock. "And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock; and I went after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said

moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee" (I Sam. 17:34-37).

### The Valley of the Shadow

"The valley of the shadow of death" may refer to any dark, dread or awful experience through which the child of God is called to pass. In this sense it is used in many places in the Scriptures. The Christian's path is not always beside still waters and in green pastures.

In pastures green? Not always; sometimes He  
Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me  
In weary ways, where heavy shadows be.

And by still waters? No, not always so,  
Ofttimes the heavy tempests round me blow,  
And o'er my soul the waves and billows go.

But when the storm beats loudest, and I cry  
Aloud for help, the Master standeth by,  
And whispers to my soul, "Lo, it is I!"

Above the tempest wild I hear Him say,  
"Beyond the darkness lies the perfect day,  
In every path of thine I lead the way."

—Henry H. Barry

But is it not kind of our Father that He puts the valley in the middle of the Psalm—not at the beginning of our Christian journey, lest we should be unduly discouraged, but in the middle—after we have been strengthened with food and drink and have been assured of the tender care and guidance of the Great Shepherd. Oh! wondrous thought and care!

Of course, "the valley of the shadow of death" refers also, and probably more particularly, to the experience of death itself. At least we have come to look upon it in such light, and doubtless thousands of God's people have found the comforting truth of this verse a safe pillow in the dying hour. It has lightened the valley, removed the fear of death, and illumined immortality.

### The Fear of Death

When a robber would scatter a flock of sheep and cause fear and consternation, he throws a dead carcass in the midst of the flock. Sheep fear nothing as much as the sight of death. Is this not true of man also? About the last fear taken from the human heart is "the fear of death." "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Even though the believer knows that the sting of death has been removed, nevertheless there is usually an attendant fear connected with the passing out of this life.

No really thoughtful man will speak lightly of death. He may, as some men may, in the fullness of health and vigor, laugh at the idea of dying; but when he comes face to face with the real experience, there is, as any minister or physician will tell you, quite a different story to tell.

It reminds me of an experience in our own family life. Behind a former residence of ours was a stretch of woods where, after school, our boys would go to play their outdoor games. It was the understanding in the home that when the whistle was blown or some other signal given the boys should come home for their meals. At times the boys would come home in response to the signal in a somewhat murmuring spirit. They have said something

like this to their mother: "Mother, what did you call us home for anyway? Didn't you know that we were just in the midst of a great game and our side was about to win? We wish you wouldn't call us." I have felt as I have listened to them speaking thus to their mother that, just at that particular time and in the middle of the day, they could, apparently, get along very well without their mother. But I have noticed this also, that at night time, after their mother had prayed with them and the lights were turned out, there was another story to tell. It seems to me that I can still hear one of the boys calling out in the dark to his mother, "Mamma, are you there?"

"Yes, son."

"Mamma."

"Yes."

"Is your face turned toward me?"

"Yes."

"Mamma, will you hold my hand? It's dark, isn't it, Mamma? Good night, Mamma."

Ah, yes, in the daytime they might think they could get along very well without their mother, but when the night comes, and the lights are all out, and it's dark, then nobody on earth but mother will do.

So it is with you, my friend. In your bravado of health and strength you may say that you are not afraid of death, but you wait until your feet come down to the brink of the river; then there will be a different story to tell. Some men haven't much use for God in life, but nobody else but God will do in the hour of death.



### The Valley Is Certain and Narrow

Death is certain. It is appointed unto men once to die. While the Lord tarries, every child of Adam will have to pass through the experience of death.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,  
But one dead lamb is there!  
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,  
But has one vacant chair!

—*Henry W. Longfellow*

We cannot bribe death. We cannot avoid or evade passing through the valley of the shadow. We cannot dig under it, nor tunnel around it, nor fly over it. Face it we must. It behooves us, therefore, to make sure that we have the light and the life which alone will secure for us a happy exit from this valley and a glorious entrance into the unfading light of a new day.

The valley of the shadow of death is narrow, very narrow—so narrow indeed that even a mother cannot take her one-hour-old babe with her. It is so narrow. She must go through the valley alone. Single file, if you please, is the order of march through this valley of the shadow. An aged woman lay dying. By her bedside, with his hand in hers, sat the man who for over fifty years had been her husband. The light was failing fast, and eternity drawing near to the aged woman. Grasping the hand of her husband tightly, she said, "John, it's getting dark. Take my hand. For over fifty years we have traveled together, and you have led me. Now it's getting dark, and I cannot see the way. John, come with me, won't you?"

But John could not go, and with tear-filled eyes and

trembling voice, he said, "Anna, I cannot, cannot go. Only Jesus can go with you."

She was a little girl of ten years. The angel of death was hovering over her bed. The end was drawing near. She said to her father, who was standing by the mother's side at the bed, "Papa, it's getting dark and I cannot see. Will you please go with me?"

With heart breaking, the father had to say, "Child, I cannot, I cannot go with you."

The girl turned to her mother and said, "Mama, then you will, won't you?"

But the mother, in turn, amid her tears, replied, "Child, I would, but I cannot. Only Jesus can go with you."

### The Personal Pronouns Change

It is interesting to note the change in the personal pronoun in this verse. Up to this point the Psalmist has been speaking in the third person and using the personal pronoun "He"—"*He* leadeth me." "*He* maketh me." "*He* restoreth"; *he, he, he*. When he comes to speak of the shadow of death, however, the third personal pronoun is changed to that of the second person: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for *thou*, [*thou*—not *he*, is with me, but *thou*] art with me." There is no room for a third person in this valley. If one does not have Christ as Saviour and Guide in the dark hour of death, he goes through the valley of the shadow all alone. Surely, without Christ with him man will stumble and fall in this valley.

Poor indeed is that soul who, when his feet are about to enter the valley, has no Guide, or, when he comes to the brink of death's river, has no Pilot.

Oh, to have no Christ, no Saviour,  
How lonely life must be!  
Like a sailor lost and driven  
On a wide and shoreless sea.

Oh, to have no Christ, no Saviour,  
No hand to clasp thine own!  
Through the dark, dark vale of shadows  
Thou must press thy way alone.

—*W. O. Cushing*

But what a blessing and comfort it is for those who know Christ as Saviour and Comforter to have the assurance that in that last hour of life He is by their side to guide them. It was doubtless this thought of the presence of Christ that comforted Tennyson when he wrote the words of that beautiful poem:

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And, may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea.

\* \* \* \*

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And, may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar.

—*Alfred Tennyson*

Someone has called the fourth verse of the Psalm a song of the waters. Did you ever hear singing on the water? There is something wonderful about it. The water seems to take all harshness out of the music, and puts something exquisitely beautiful into it. Here then is "a psalm of the waters," a song for the believer to sing when his feet are touching the margin of the river: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee . . . For I am the LORD thy God."

Here, too, is "a song in the night." Sing it, Christian pilgrim, when earth's last hour is at hand. Sing it as you enter the valley. Sing it as the darkness deepens. Sing it when the light of earth's day begins to fade. Sing it when the earth is receding, heaven is opening and God is calling you. Sing it until the glory of the eternal morn breaks upon thine enraptured vision. Sing it until your feet stand upon that golden shore against which death's chilly wave never again shall dash, and where death is no more. Sing it, sing this song of the waters—"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Why be afraid of Death as though your life were  
breath!

Death but anoints your eyes with clay. Oh glad  
surprise!

Why should you be forlorn? Death only husks the  
corn.

Why should you fear to meet the thresher of the  
wheat?

Is sleep a thing to dread? Yet sleeping, you are  
dead

Till you awake and rise, here, or beyond the skies.

Why should it be a wrench, to leave your wooden  
bench?

Why not with happy shout run home when school  
is out?

The dear ones left behind? O foolish one and blind.  
A day—and you will meet—a night—and you will  
greet!

This is the death of Death, to breathe away a breath,  
And know the end of strife and taste the deathless  
life.

And joy without a fear and smile without a tear,  
And work, nor care, nor rest, and find the last the  
best.

—*Maltbie D. Babcock*

### “Thy Rod and Thy Staff They Comfort Me”

The rod is a protection from all the adversaries of the night. No enemy, not even the last enemy, death, can affright the soul in the care of the tender Shepherd, for He has extracted the sting from death. The staff is used for counting the sheep as they pass one by one into the fold. This action is sometimes called “passing under the rod.” The language used here indicates safety and security.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;  
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

—*Henry F. Lyte*

Christ hath *abolished* death and brought life and immortality to light. The word "abolished" is a very strong one in the Greek. It has three root letters, *e*, *r* and *g*. Then the preposition *kata* is added to it, thus making our English word "energy" which means "a working force." Then, in a way known to Greek students, the preposition gives the word, as it were, the force of a double negative. So the apostle teaches us that Christ, when He came into the world and died on the cross, did something with death. He double-twisted it, He de-vitalized it, double-negated it, made it inoperative, rendered it powerless, so that ever afterwards it would be unable to hurt the children of God.

I do not know very much about bees except, of course, that they sting. I am told, however, that when a bee stings you it leaves it sting in the wound and goes away to die. A little child may play with the bee after it has stung a person without any harm coming to the child. The bee has lost its power to hurt. So we are told that the sting of death is sin. Death stung Christ on the cross and left its sting in Him, so that ever after it could not hurt the children of God. He is "Death of death and hell's destruction."

Christ the Great Shepherd will be there at the entrance of the valley to meet you and lead you through. He will beat off all the powers of death. He will destroy all the enemies of darkness and convey you safely through the valley into the Homeland. He holds the keys of death and the grave. How helpless a thing a sheep is! How much in need of a defender it is! It seems as though almost any other animal can defend itself. A dog will fight when



attacked. A sheep stands helpless in the presence of its opponent. Christ, the Good Shepherd, will protect to the last.

The comforting thoughts of this verse must certainly take the sting out of death for those who grasp the great truths taught here. It surely abolishes death and illumines immortality.

No one need fear death with such thoughts as these before him. The apostle Paul asserts that every believer in Christ has "a cheerful view of death," and desires rather "to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord" than to remain here upon the earth.

Go to thy grave, not as the slave scourged to his dungeon, or the dog whipped to his kennel, but as the prince wraps around him the drapery of his couch and lies down to pleasant dreams. The conscious companionship of the Christ will remove thy fears. With what alacrity, courage and fearlessness doth he walk the highway whose heart is honest and whose conscience doth not convict him of the violation of his country's laws! How different with the criminal! How full of fear and apprehension!

Abide with me! fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens—Lord, with me abide!  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see;  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me!

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me!

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows  
flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

—*Henry F. Lyte*

## CHAPTER FIVE

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

**T**HERE is a variety of senses in which the truth of this verse may be understood.

It is said that in the ancient days a shepherd's tent was a kind of city of refuge. The man who had unwittingly slain another could find refuge in a shepherd's tent from the avenger of blood. The fugitive was permitted to stay a given length of time within the shepherd's care, during which time he was as safe from the pursuer as though he were in the actual city of refuge. The pursuer might be raging with fury outside of the door of the tent, but the fugitive could eat with perfect safety and peace in the presence of his enemy. How like Christ in His relation to the believer!

One day Charles Wesley stood looking out of a partly open window at the fierce storm howling without, when a young robin, quickly passing some other birds, flew to his breast, seeking shelter from its foes. It was then he wrote that wonderful hymn, the opening words of which are:

Jesus, Lover of my soul,  
Let me to Thy bosom fly!

Is not this a picture of this verse of the Psalm? "And a man [Jesus Christ] shall be for a hiding place and a refuge from the storm." Are we not safe in Him from all our foes? "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

We are told that in David's day it was the custom of conquering kings and princes to bring the royal captives of the contending defeated army into a large banqueting house. To each pillar in the house a prisoner of royal blood or a commanding officer was chained. The banquet tables were heavily laden with good things of which the victors partook. Feasting and jollification were indulged in, and joy and gladness were manifest in the presence of defeated and chained enemies. Are we not made "always to triumph" over all our foes in Christ? Are we not made "more than conquerors" in Him who hath "led captivity captive"? "Ye shall eat your meat in quietness, and nothing shall make you afraid."

Or, again, it may be that reference is made in this verse to the grazing of sheep in fields full of snakeholes or of poisonous plants. A sheep raiser in Texas once told the writer that he lost a great many sheep because snakes would come up through holes in the ground and bite the sheep as they grazed, poisoning them. After losing many of the flock he finally discovered a remedy. A mixture of some kind was poured down the holes, which killed the snakes, and after that the sheep were able to graze in peace and safety. Hath not Christ abolished

death for the believer? Has He not deprived death of its sting and stripped the grave of its victim? Hath He not overcome that old serpent, the Devil? Do we not overcome the dragon, that old serpent, the Devil and Satan, the accuser of the brethren day and night—do we not overcome him by the blood of the Lamb?

Whichever of these meanings may be adopted as indicating the teaching of this verse, we may be certain that the truth the Psalmist desires to express is this: That God gives His children victory over all their foes, and makes them more than conquerors over all their enemies. Thus shall we “eat our meat in peace and quietness, and nothing shall make us afraid.” “Why do the heathen rage? . . . He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh”—and so shall we.

On the Rock of Ages founded,  
Who can shake thy sure repose?  
With salvation's walls surrounded,  
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes.

—*John Newton*

### **“Thou Anointest My Head with Oil: My Cup Runneth Over”**

A shepherd must needs be a physician also. In the belt of the shepherd medicines are always carried. Sheep are very susceptible to sicknesses of many kinds, particularly fevers. Ofttimes at night as the sheep passed into the fold, the shepherd's knowing eye would detect that one or another of them was sick and feverish. Perhaps it had been bitten by a serpent or torn by some wild animal. He would take the feverish sheep and plunge its head into clear, cold water, plunging the head so far into the

pail that the water would run over, or anoint the bruise with mollifying ointment. Doubtless David is thinking of this experience of his shepherd life.

Or, again, David may be referring to the bountiful water supply provided for the sheep and applying it to the rich provision God has made for the believer. Not only is there grace enough for oneself, but with the believer as a channel, an abundance for others.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;  
More than all in Thee I find!

—*Charles Wesley*

This is the wonderful truth taught by Jesus in the Temple: "Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water." Here we see how the believer may come to Christ for the quenching of his own thirst, and then draw on, or drink more deeply of Christ for the quenching of the thirst of others. "Thou, O Christ, art all I want; more than all in Thee I find." Here we have the personal and relative side of a consecrated life of service.

My cup is to "run over." No selfish religion must I claim. I am to be satisfied with Christ first myself, then I am to take from Him so large a supply that others with whom I come into contact may also partake of His fullness. No hermit, no ascetic, monk, or recluse would the Master have me be.



There are hermit souls that live withdrawn  
In the peace of their self-content;  
There are souls, like stars, that dwell apart  
In a fellowless firmament.  
There are pioneer souls that blaze their paths  
Where highways never ran—  
But let me live by the side of the road  
And be a friend to man.

Let me live in my house by the side of the road  
Where the race of men go by—  
The men who are good and the men who are bad,  
As good and as bad as I,  
I would not sit in the scorner's seat,  
Or hurl the cynic's ban—  
Let me live in the house by the side of the road  
And be a friend to man.

I see from my house by the side of the road,  
By the side of the highway of life,  
The men who press with the ardor of hope,  
The men who are faint with the strife;  
But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears—  
Both parts of an infinite plan—  
Let me live in a house by the side of the road  
And be a friend to man.

—*Sam Walter Foss*

## CHAPTER SIX

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

THE writer was once called to speak with a Scotch Presbyterian elder who was rapidly passing from this life. I had read to him this last verse of the Psalm, when, turning in his bed, he said to me in words that were almost his last, "Take my Bible and read that verse to me from 'The Psalms in Metre' in the back of my Bible." I took his Scotch Bible from a table close by and read:

Goodness and mercy all my life  
Shall surely follow me,  
And in God's house forevermore  
My dwelling place shall be.

—*William Whittingham*

Someone has well said that "goodness and mercy" are God's two collie dogs to preserve the Christian from all danger. Others have likened "goodness and mercy" to the Christian's footmen to wait upon him daily. "The house of the Lord" is doubtless here contrasted with the tent of the shepherd, just as the words "dwell forever" are contrasted with the fact that the fugitive was allowed to stay in the shepherd's tent only a limited time.

This verse expresses the confidence of the Christian with regard to the future. It is the Christian's confidence that in the Father's house a mansion is prepared for him, and that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is taken down and dissolved by death he has a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. This is surely a grand provision for old age, a life insurance worthy of the name, a home for the winter of life, and a blessed assurance with regard to one's eternity. How poor indeed is that soul that cannot say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil"; for the grave is not the terminus but the passageway that leads to endless light and life, into the glory and beauty of the house of the Lord in which the believer shall "dwell forever." Beyond the night of death lies the perfect day; beyond the valley of the shadow lie the plains of peace.

One cannot help but wonder if you, reader, have such a confident hope with regard to your future life. Only those who are able to say "The LORD is my shepherd" are able to say "I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."

A famous Scotch preacher tells us that a demented boy, who was in the habit of attending one of the classes in his Sunday school, was sick unto death. The minister was asked to go to see the boy. He went to the house, and in speaking with the lad and after reading the Scriptures he was about to leave, when this boy, with only half his reasoning power, demented and partly idiotic, asked the great preacher if he wouldn't kneel down and recite for him the Twenty-third Psalm. In obedience to the boy's request he knelt and repeated the Twenty-third Psalm, until he came

to the last verse which, as you know, reads "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." But the preacher did not repeat this last verse, for he was saying to himself while on his knees, "This verse can hardly be true of this boy; surely goodness and mercy has not followed him all the days of his life, and further, what does he know about the determination of this verse—to dwell in the house of the LORD forever?" And so the great preacher was rising from his knees, having omitted the last verse, when the boy reached out his hand and, placing it on the shoulder of the minister, pressed him again to his knees and repeated the last verse of the Psalm—the verse the preacher had omitted, as it is written in the Scotch hymn book:

Goodness and mercy all my life  
Shall surely follow me;  
And in God's house for evermore  
My dwelling place shall be.

—William Whittingham

This was a lesson the preacher never forgot. Can you, my reader, you, with all your senses, your keenness of brain and intellect—can you say what this idiotic boy could say: "I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever"?

I am reminded in this connection of one of Bunyan's characters in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. He is referred to as "Mr. Feeble Mind." This character in speaking of his immortal hope—that hope which lies beyond the valley of the shadow and the grave—expresses it in this way: "But this I am resolved on: to run when I can, to go when I

cannot run, and to creep when I cannot go. As to the main, I thank Him that loved me. I am fixed. My way is before me. My mind is beyond the river that hath no bridge, though I am, as you see, but of a feeble mind." Mark that wonderful expression, will you—

My mind is beyond the river that hath no bridge.

Is yours? You—man, woman, with all your senses, of strong and sound mind, can you give expression to an exclamation of faith like that?

There are some of my readers on whose head time has laid its hand and whitened their hair to the whiteness of that winter in which all their glory must fade. Their sun of life is going down beyond the hill of life. The young may die; the old must die. Oh, the pity of it, to see the old and gray with no eternal life insurance for the winter of life! The gray head is indeed a crown of glory if it be found in the way of life; otherwise it is a fool's cap. Reader, may your eventide be light, and may your path be as the path of the just that shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day!

Thus we see that the grave is not the end. We pass through the grave only in order that we may place our last climbing footstep upon the threshold of our Father's house, to go out no more. Then we shall dwell forever there. Beyond the grave lie the Plains of Peace, the Homeland—with all the loved who have gone before—those whom we "have loved long since and lost awhile."

Is the way so dark, O wanderer,  
Is the hillcrest wild and steep,

Far, so far, the vale beyond thee,  
Where the homelights vigil keep?  
Still the goal lies far before thee,  
Soon will fall on thee the night;  
Breast the path that takes thee onward,  
Fight the storm with all thy might.

Tho' thy heart be faint and weary,  
Tho' thy footsteps fain would cease,  
Journey onward—past the hillcrest  
Lie for thee the Plains of Peace!

Is thy path so rough, O pilgrim,  
Passing on thy way through life;  
Deep the sorrows that beset thee,  
Great the burden, wild the strife?  
Tho' the hill of life be weary,  
Tho' the goal of rest be far,  
Set thy whole heart to endeavor,  
Turn thy soul to yon bright star.

From the toiling, from the striving  
There at last shall come release;  
One shall bring thee past the hillcrest,  
Home unto His Plains of Peace;  
One shall bring thee past the hillcrest,  
Home, Home, Home unto His Plains of Peace!

—Clifton Bingham



# LOOKING BEYOND



## THE TEXT

**W**E have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. . . .

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Now he that hath wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

## II Corinthians 4:7—5:10

## CHAPTER I

### Life's Great Need

We are troubled on every side, . . . perplexed, . . . persecuted, . . . cast down, . . . alway delivered unto death.

### We Need Help

**B**ECAUSE life is what it is, we need glimpses into the beyond and the support of great, sustaining and uplifting truths—truths that undergird the soul in times of stress and strain.

Such glimpses and such truths the apostle gives us in this most marvelous chapter. It would be well for the troubled soul to read the fourth and fifth chapters of II Corinthians many times; therein the aged and severely tried and troubled apostle sets forth what had been his comfort during those experiences when he had known what it was to taste of the bitter cup of sorrow and persecution.

Paul's call and commission to service carried with it the assurance that he must suffer much for Christ's sake: "For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." And, oh, how minutely was that prediction fulfilled! We have a brief epitome of those sufferings given in the eleventh chapter of II Corinthians.

Here it is:

I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, . . . I am bold also. . . . Are they ministers of Christ? . . . I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities (II Cor. 11:21-30).

And yet, notwithstanding all these sufferings, no man was more blessedly happy at any time than this great, suffering apostle. He had found the secret of blessedness amid adversity, and in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians he reveals to us this marvelous secret.

### What Is Life?

Life is not one round of pleasure. It was not meant to be a flower garden, but a sand-strewn wrestling ground. Not many flowers can grow where the feet of the gladiator tread.



Not enjoyment and not pleasure is our destined end  
or way;

But to live that each tomorrow finds us nearer than  
today.

True, there are those to whom life seems like a dream. They never seem to get beyond the airy surface of things. They remind us somewhat of a pleasure yacht at the sea-side. We watch the yacht speeding from place to place, and tacking hither and thither; but it has no definite place to go, nor is it bound on any special service. It is just out for a pleasure trip.

But to most people life is more like a great ocean liner, loaded with its human life and freight. There is something of seriousness in its very mien. Its gigantic size suggests the importance and sublimity of its task and purpose. When it is loosed from its moorings it is with the specific purpose of sailing towards a destined haven and reaching a definite port. At the end of its journey its passengers meet loved ones, reach home, and find the realization of anticipated loves, dreams, and longings.

### Life's Alternations

Life is a series of alternations. It has its up and downs, its births and deaths, its weddings and funerals, its joys and sorrows, its failures and successes, its defeats and victories. One day we find ourselves happily stepping to the "Wedding March" of *Lohengrin*; the next, we are slowly making our way to the tomb to the doleful sound of the "Dead March" from *Saul*. One day we find ourselves bedecked with orange blossoms; the next, draped with funeral weeds. One day we are on the mountain top of

success and achievement; the next, in the valley of defeat and failure. And so life goes on alternating. If Shakespeare wrote *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, he wrote also *The Tragedy of Macbeth*. If Napoleon had his Austerlitz of victory, he had also his Waterloo of defeat.

One of the saddest pictures I think I ever saw was that of Napoleon on the deck of the "Bellerophon." There he stands, the defeated and captive emperor, a prisoner in the hands of the British. He is alone on deck, and is looking through a telescope at the fast receding shores of his beloved France, sobbing aloud, "Farewell, France, the land of my dreams; farewell, farewell!" Life had been indeed a keen disappointment to him. It is said that when Napoleon died, a prisoner on the Island of St. Helena, his companion in captivity went to the British officer in charge, and asked permission to erect a gravestone with but two words on it: "Napoleon, Emperor." The privilege was not granted, and it is said that Napoleon's faithful friend wrote on a small, rough-hewn slab at the head of Napoleon's grave these words: "Here lies one with no name." Oh, how tragic life had been to that greatest soldier of the modern world, the man who once held Europe in the palm of his hand, and placed and displaced kings at his will!

### Life Disappointing

There is so much in life that is disappointing; the unexpected so often happens. The child is ill; the bank has failed, and the savings of a lifetime are gone; business has failed, and with it obligations incurred that it seems impossible for even a lifetime to meet; friends have disappointed us; those upon whom we have leaned hardest have

become tired of the pressure; death has come into the home and taken away the loving partner of a lifetime, and henceforth we are to walk alone; the doctor has pronounced that we are in the grip of an incurable malady, and we must go through life with dread and fear; the son or daughter upon whom we had built our hopes has keenly disappointed us, and instead of honor has brought shame on the family name; the old home and its furnishings have gone beneath the sound of the auctioneer's hammer, and in old age we find ourselves homeless and bereft. This is life as it really is—life as it is to all of us some of the time, to many of us most of the time, and to some of us all of the time. And it is for such a life that we need great, comforting, supporting and sustaining truths, such as the apostle gives us, to take the bitterness out of living, to sanctify every sorrow, to make us see the rainbow through our tears, and cause us to realize that

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh  
in the morning.

And that

Darkest night will always come before the dawning,  
Silver linings shine on God's side of the cloud;  
All your journey He has promised to be with you,  
Naught has come to you but what His love allowed.

### Life's Antidote

And what has the apostle to offer as an antidote to life as we have portrayed it and as we find it daily? Is there any balm in Gilead? Is there any physician there? Are there any Elim trees that may be cast into life's bitter waters

to make them sweet? What have we to say to a weary, stricken, heartbroken, disappointed and suffering world? If there is no comfort to offer, no balm to heal, no sweetness to alleviate, then we do not wonder that men and women seek death by revolver, poison, or a watery grave. In such times as these it is either faith or suicide. There is no other alternative, it would seem, to many thousands of those who are experiencing, not singing, Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

But to the Christian, light arises in the darkness; hope displaces gloom; the consciousness of permanent possessions eases the disappointment of temporary loss; and the blessed hope of meeting loved ones whom we have "loved long since and lost a while" heals the pain of their leaving us by death. The "disappointments" of life are sweetened by the belief that they are "His-appointments," that loss is gain, that death is life, that darkness is light, and that, finally, we shall see with undimmed vision and tearless eyes that all things have worked together for our good.

The apostle Paul, in the chapter under consideration, gives us four great supporting and sustaining truths for times of stress and strain. Here they are—and we shall examine them one by one, and seek to derive the comfort and strength intended:

First, that this life is not all.

Second, that Christians may have a cheerful view of death.

Third, that God has given to us an earnest of the life to come.

Fourth, that we shall be rewarded for all the good that we have done.

Let us thoughtfully and prayerfully look at each of these marvelous truths and glean from them, as honey from the honeycomb, all the possible good, comfort, and strength we can.

## CHAPTER II

### This Life Is Not All

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

WITH the apostle, death was not the end of all things. Paul knew that when his "earthly house" was taken down, and his spirit had taken its flight from his body of clay, there existed for him another life—larger, nobler, fuller. To Paul, death meant largeness of life.

Somehow or other, belief in immortality is inherent in man. There is a verse in the Bible which in thought says, "God hath put eternity in the heart of man." And deep down in the crypt of every human breast you will find that conviction, and in spite of the attempts of atheistic teaching to annihilate it, man finds it asserting itself again and again, saying, "I believe."

Years ago a noted and brilliant lawyer, a professed atheist, traveled up and down our land lecturing on the fallacy of belief in a future life, in God, in religion, and in the Bible.

### Doubting the Future

And for this he was paid hundreds of dollars per lecture. As one becomes acquainted with the life story of this famous infidel lecturer, he wonders whether he really believed in his own atheistic and infidel creed. He was once publicly accused of being an infidel, to which he replied, "I am not an infidel, nor am I an atheist; I do not say there is no God and no future life; I claim to be an agnostic; I just do not know, nor does anyone else."

And, further, when one reads the oration which this famous lawyer delivered at the graveside of his brother, we get an insight into what the man really believed deep down in the recesses of his soul. A quotation from that oration will illustrate what I mean. He said: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the unreplying lips of the voiceless dead there comes no response. But in the hour of death hope sees a star and listening love hears the rustle of an angel's wing. There was, there is no greater man than my brother." Here the noted infidel expressed what really was in the depth of his heart. He spoke of hope and angels and immortality.

We are told that the eagle lives five hundred years and the whale one thousand years. It would be difficult for the ordinary man to affirm or deny this statement. But this we can say: It would seem unfair on the part of God to give these creatures such a long tenure of life, and then cut off man, who was made in His own image, with the brief span of threescore years and ten.



But we are not thus cut off! "Once born, the soul dies not; 'tis an eternal thing." After this life there is another life. We die, not to extinction or nothingness. The Christian dies to largeness of life—life more abundant, life eternal and everlasting.

### Have All Faith?

Eternal existence is true of all men whether they have Christian faith or not. The wicked exist forever even though they do not have eternal life. Eternal life—that which the Christian receives at the moment of believing on Jesus Christ—does not mean, primarily, certainly not exclusively, to live forever, but to live forever in blessedness and glory with God. The wicked and unbelieving live forever—but without God; theirs is not a blessed, but a wretched existence.

And it is this thought of another life, in which the inequalities, wrongs, sorrows, heartaches, privations, temptations, and sins of this life have no part or place, that enables us to bear with patience and fortitude the ills of the life that now is. The light of the glorious "tomorrow" brightens up the gloom of "today." We can well endure the weeping of the night, as long as we are assured that joy cometh in the morning. Moses endured the reproaches that befell him for his confidence and trust in God because "he had respect unto the recompense of reward." It was the glorious outlook the future held before him that enabled him to bear the severe trials that daily crossed his path. Doubtless the princes of Egypt laughed at Moses when they saw him, as heir apparent, give up the throne of the Pharaohs and forsake the treasures of Egypt. But what has become

of those princes? We know not. We may gaze upon their mummies, but Moses lives forever with God.

As we have already intimated, Paul was perhaps the greatest sufferer for the sake of Christ known in the annals of Christian history, and yet he was most happy, contented and blessed. Singing in prison, rejoicing amid affliction, radiant in the midst of gloom, living in the face of daily dying, and yet glorying in it all. What was the secret of Paul's blessedness? It was expressed in that famous statement near the close of his life: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." This was the apostle's "blessed hope," and it was this future glimpse that enabled him to bear all the ills of life that came to him and upon him daily. He looked not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen—the eternal.

Thus it is with us in the present day. Life to most of us is filled with trials, adversities, privations, and sufferings. And there is no power on earth that can alleviate our condition.

### Longings Realized

We must manfully and bravely bear whatever ill there comes to us. And we will be able thus to do only as we get this glimpse of the future to which the apostle directs our longing hearts, and as we believe on the Christ of

whom the apostle speaks. Do we hunger or thirst? In that other land they "neither hunger nor thirst." Do we weep here? There will come a day when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Are our bodies racked with pain? In that land yonder the inhabitants never say "I am sick." Do we fear death, or have we lost loved ones? In that other life "they die no more," no hearse hurries with its burden to the tomb, nor is the bosom of the fair earth torn open to receive our believing dead. Are our lives barren for the lost companionships caused through death? In that other world we shall meet them again; separations will then be over.

### How Faith Helps

I went one day into the office of a physician, a friend of mine. He was a man over sixty years of age. A great sorrow had just come into his life. His fiscal agent had proved to be a scoundrel, and had robbed him of some sixty-five thousand dollars, and in addition had made him responsible for the payment of another thirty thousand dollars. All this meant that the entire fortune of the physician had been lost. His home also had to be sold to meet the forthcoming obligations. And at his advanced age, the physician stood homeless, with the savings of a lifetime swept away. What should he do? Many a man in such an emergency has taken his life rather than face such a dark and dismal future. But not so with my physician friend. He had come to know Christ as a personal Saviour, and had implicit confidence in the life to come; and so instead of committing suicide, as many a man has

done under such circumstances, he reached out his hand, took mine in his, and said:

A tent or a cottage, why should I care?  
They're building a palace for me over there!  
Though exiled from home, yet still I may sing:  
All glory to God, I'm the child of a King.

Here was a man undergoing a most severe and critical trial in life, who found not only resignation but comfort and blessedness in the thought that some day it will all be different; that there is another life coming in which all that hurts and pains will have passed away.

I stood by the bedside of my dying daughter. She was our first-born child and our only girl. There I stood in the face of sorrow, than which there is perhaps no greater. What was my comfort? What great truth was it that supported me in that time of stress and strain and loss? It was the truth that there is another life, and that I would see her again over yonder. And as I stooped down to kiss her forehead, fast growing cold, I said, "Good night, Dorothy, dear; I will see you in the morning." There was that sustaining, supporting, strengthening, comforting and blessed truth which upheld me in a time of stress and strain.

There is a most beautiful story told in connection with the hymn entitled, "My Jesus, As Thou Wilt." It was written by a German pastor of about the seventeenth century, named Benjamin Schmolck. A great plague swept over the town in which he lived, during which plague, it is said, he lost his wife and two children. A year or two later his home was accidentally set on fire. Then he was

stricken with paralysis, and later with blindness. When one recalls these sad experiences, he can well understand this wonderful hymn; he can read between the lines and see these experiences:

My Jesus, as Thou wilt;  
Oh, may Thy will be mine;  
Into Thy hand of love  
I would my all resign:  
Through sorrow or through joy,  
Conduct me as Thine own,  
And help me still to say,  
My Lord, Thy will be done.

My Jesus, as Thou wilt;  
Though seen through many a tear;  
Let not my star of hope  
Grow dim or disappear:  
Since Thou on earth hast wept,  
And sorrowed oft alone,  
If I must weep with Thee,  
My Lord, Thy will be done.

My Jesus, as Thou wilt;  
All shall be well with me;  
Each changing future scene  
I gladly trust with Thee:  
Straight to my home above  
I travel calmly on,  
And sing, in life or death,—  
My Lord, Thy will be done.

## CHAPTER III

### A Cheerful View of Death

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

**P**ARAPHRASED, these verses could be rendered: "Therefore we have a cheerful view of death."

That is an exceedingly interesting statement. Usually we do not refer to death in this way. We speak of it solemnly and in a funereal tone. The shroud, the casket, the crepe, the tomb—these we put as far away from us as we can. We say, "Do not speak about death; speak about life; it is life we need, more life; do not mention death."

Perhaps the last fear that is taken out of the heart of man is the fear of death. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Death seems to hang like a pall over all of us, and only Jesus and the blessed truth of His gospel can remove this fear. How remarkable are the words of Hebrews 2:14 in the light of this thought: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power over death, that

is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." It is the death of Jesus on the cross that has lifted the death pall that has hung over the race. Paul saw that truth and consequently had no fear of death.

### The Fear of Death

But the fear of death is natural to men. I have sometimes felt that I would like to ask an audience to express itself in this regard: I would like to ask every man and woman in the audience who is afraid to die to stand up. I am very sure that if my audience expressed itself truthfully, some of the best men and women present would stand up. I again affirm, that the last fear that is taken out of the human heart is the fear of death.

It is related of Darwin, who with Alfred Russel Wallace, advanced the false theory of evolution, that he was in the habit of visiting the zoological gardens in London and playing with a large boa constrictor which was kept in a glass case. When the scientist would rap on the glass case, the reptile would slowly uncoil itself. The scientist would again rap on the case and the snake would suddenly dart at him. Mr. Darwin would quickly fall back. Why? Because he was afraid of being bitten by the snake? Hardly that, for there was thick glass between him and the reptile. The scientist, in falling back, although there really was no danger, was just expressing the natural fear of man. Normally and naturally, man is afraid of death, or of anything that borders on it.

It is remarkable, therefore, that Paul should be able to say, in view of this inherent fear of death on the part of



the race, that "we have a cheerful view of death." We are led to wonder where Paul obtained this cheerful view of death. Let us see if we can discover the source of this blessed outlook.

### **"Death Like Sleep"**

First, I think that Paul must have been studying the teaching of Jesus about death. How beautifully Jesus spoke of death! His references to it seemed to take all the sting out of it. He said on one occasion: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." He seems to indicate that there are circumstances under which the death of the body is too trivial to be considered. When He was resting in Perea and news was brought to Him that His friend Lazarus had died, He turned to His disciples and said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." When Jesus entered the room in which lay the body of Jairus' daughter, He said to the mourners, "The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." How comforting His words in Revelation: "Fear not; . . . I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades."

Jesus referred to death as "sleep." So did Paul: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Jesus died; we sleep. He became poor; we become rich. He died that we might live; because He died, we will never die.

What did Jesus mean by the use of the word "sleep"? When He said, "Lazarus sleepeth," and "The maid sleepeth," just what did He mean to convey? Well, not that the soul was asleep, nor that it was unconscious between the death and the resurrection of the body. Jesus never in the

slightest degree taught either the sleep or unconsciousness of the soul between death and the resurrection. The appearance of Moses and Elijah on the transfiguration mount shows clearly that the souls of the departed are conscious. Moses had been dead fifteen hundred years, and there he was back again on earth, talking with Jesus about His approaching death at Jerusalem. In the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, our Lord gives us permission for a brief moment to peer through a window, as it were, into the abode of the blessed, and also into the abode of the wicked, and we see that in both instances the souls of the departed were quite conscious.

### Meaning of "Sleep"

What then did Jesus mean by "sleep"? He was using a figure of speech by which He was trying to make a gruesome subject beautiful and to throw light upon a dark picture; therefore, he refers to death as "sleep."

What happens in "sleep"? Perhaps if we know this we shall be able to understand what Jesus meant by the use of this figure. Three things take place during sleep. When I put my head on my pillow and go to sleep, my natural life does not cease. My pulse still beats, my blood still circulates, my heart still throbs, and my consciousness, at least my subliminal consciousness, is not quiescent. My mind may be quite active in dreaming or planning. So sleep does not interfere with or impair the flow of my natural life. And what we call "death" can no more impair the spiritual and eternal life which God gives to the soul at the moment of believing than sleep impairs the natural life.

Another thing happens in sleep. All our cares, sorrows and heartaches are not remembered while we sleep. I recall that after I had remained by the side of my dying daughter for some days and her spirit had finally taken its flight to be with her Lord, the physician said to me, "You had better go and get some sleep now." I said, "Doctor, I cannot sleep; my mind is too agitated; I cannot rest." He said, "You must rest." He then gave me some medicine, and I slept for several hours. And during all those sleeping hours I had no remembrance of my sad loss and bereavement, my heartache, the pain of soul and spirit brought about by the loss of our darling daughter. No, sleep was a cure for all that. And that is just what death is to the believer—it is the absence of the things that pain, hurt, worry, alarm and harass. It is a going out of this life, which is filled with such sad experiences, into a life in which they are not known; a life in which these "former things have passed away."

Again, there is another suggestive thing that takes place in sleep. Sleeping means waking. When I put my head on my pillow at night, I expect to waken in the morning. In our home we used to have a big alarm clock, which would ring out its rising signal each morning at a given hour. We would then arise and prepare for the duties of the day. And so it shall be with death:

I shall waken in the morning, when I hear the  
angels sing,

Look into the face of Jesus, while about His form  
I cling;

He will lift me to His bosom, place my head upon  
His breast,  
In the loving arms of Jesus, I shall ever be at rest.

Why then should we be afraid of death when death is but a sleep?

### **"Death Is Departure"**

Paul himself uses a very striking and suggestive word in defining and describing death; he calls it "departure." "The time of my departure is at hand," he said, as he was momentarily expecting to put his head on the block and die as a martyr for Jesus.

The word "departure" is a significant word. It is a sailor's word. It indicates the time of the departure of a ship from the pier to which it has been fastened. Perhaps you have been at a pier and noted a clock over which were these words: "This steamer departs at ten o'clock," which meant that when ten o'clock should come, the ropes that held that steamer to the pier would be pulled in, the signal given for it to leave its moorings and start out on its voyage. Well, that is just what death is to the Christian. It is the loosing of this frail bark of life from the shores of earth, that the soul may take its flight "past the headlights, past the headlands, into the great eternity." It is the hour of the soul's departure to be with God.

The hour of a ship's departure for the homeland is a glad hour. Have you ever been on a tour of some foreign country and then stepped aboard the ship that was to bring you home again? Do you remember how happy you were when you stepped on board? I well remember my own joy, when, after my second world tour, a tour

in which I was away from home and loved ones for almost nine months, I stepped on board the "Mauretania" at Cherbourg. I can well understand how Van Dyke felt when he wrote that poem:

It is good to see the Old World, and travel up and  
down

Among the famous countries and cities of renown;  
To admire the crumbly castles and the monuments  
and kings;

But soon or late you have enough of antiquated  
things.

Oh, it's home again, and home again, America for  
me!

My heart is turning home again, to God's country,  
To the blessed land of Room Enough, beyond the  
ocean bars,

Where the air is full of sunshine and the flag is full  
of stars.

### Getting Back Home

I felt just like that myself. And when, standing on the deck of that great ocean liner, I heard a whistle blow, a bell ring, and then felt a stirring and shaking of that great ship as she moved from the pier and turned her bow toward America—well, I cannot tell you how exceedingly happy I was. "The time of my departure was at hand."

Bret Harte tells us that he was afraid of death until he caught this vision of it as set forth by Paul, and then the poet sat down and penned those beautiful verses:

As I stand by the cross on the lone mountain's crest,  
Looking over the ultimate sea,  
In the gloom of the mountain a ship lies at rest,  
And one sails away from the lea:  
One spreads its white wings on a far-reaching track,  
With pennant and sheet flowing free;  
One hides in the shadow with sails laid aback,—  
The ship that is waiting for me!

But lo, in the distance the clouds break away!  
The Gate's glowing portals I see;  
And I hear from the outgoing ship in the bay  
The song of the sailors in glee:  
So I think of the luminous footprints that bore  
The comfort o'er dark Galilee,  
And wait for the signal to go to the shore,  
To the ship that is waiting for me.

### "Death Abolished"

Paul used another suggestively striking word in describing death. He declared, "Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The word "abolished" is a most significant one, rich with meaning and flashing with glorious light. (See page 60.)

It is written of Simeon: "It was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." And, my friend in Christ, that is true of you: you shall not taste of death, because Jesus has met and tasted it before you, and has removed all that is harmful from it. The hand may be the hand of Esau, but the voice will be the voice of Jacob.

From morn till eve they struggled—  
Life and Death.  
At first it seemed to me as though in mirth they  
contended,  
As foes of equal worth;  
But when the sharp red sun cut through its sheath  
of western clouds,  
I saw Death's grip tighten and bear the radiant form  
of Life to earth,  
And suddenly both antagonists downward fell.  
And then—ah, wonder of wonders, when I went to  
the place where they had fallen,  
I could not find the body that I sought;  
But one form was there—the dark, lone form of  
Death,  
And it was dead.

Thus has the Prince of Life conquered death. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . But thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Death cannot keep his prey—Jesus, my Saviour!  
He tore the bars away—Jesus, my Lord!  
Up from the grave He arose  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign;  
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

### D. L. Moody's Death

When Mr. Moody lay dying in his Northfield home, it is said that as he awoke out of a deep sleep about seven



o'clock in the morning, he was heard to say: "Earth is receding; heaven is opening; it is beautiful. If this is death, it is sweet; there is no valley here; God is calling me, and I must go." At first the family thought he was dreaming, but he said, "No, this is no dream," and then he added: "This is my coronation day! I have been looking forward to it for years." Later, his face lit up, as he exclaimed, "Dwight! Irene! I see the children's faces." He referred to his grandchildren who had gone before him.

Sinking into unconsciousness, it seemed for a while as though he had passed into the unseen world; but under the effect of heart stimulants, he revived and suddenly raised himself on his elbow exclaiming, "What does this mean? What are you all doing here? This is a strange thing. I have been beyond the gates of death to the very portals of Heaven, and here I am back again."

In answer to his daughter's plea not to leave them, he replied: "I'll stay as long as I can, but if my time is come, I am ready to go." For a while he thought that perhaps God was going to perform a miracle and raise him up to health, and so insisted on leaving the bed, and sitting in his chair, saying, "I can meet death in my chair as well as in here." He walked across the room and sat in his easy chair for a while, but another sinking spell seized him, and he was willing to return to his bed. In a few minutes he "fell on sleep," quietly and peacefully, to join the heavenly choirs on the following Christmas morning.

If we can think and talk about death like D. L. Moody, cheerfully and gladly, without fear, as a blessing to those

who are saved, why not talk about it more than we do?  
Paul had a cheerful view of death; have we?

I shall not die when life's swift race is run;  
Through the mists I shall see the rising sun.  
And He will come, and take me by the hand, and say:  
"Come Home, my Child." And we shall go together  
into endless day.

## CHAPTER IV

### “The Earnest of the Spirit”

Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

#### Witness of the Spirit

THE Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer is the pledge of the glorious future that God has provided for us. It is the indwelling Spirit who not only assures us of the reality of these things by opening to our minds and hearts the marvelous promises of the Word of God, but also causes us to *feel* the reality of the wonderful things God has laid up for the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Take, as an illustration, the matter of our sonship—that we are sons of God by reason of our faith in the Lord Jesus. In Romans 8:14, our sonship is *declared*: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they *are* the sons of God.” Here sonship is *alleged*, and is to be believed on the authority of the statement of God’s Word whether we have any feeling about it or not. But in Romans 8:16 (R. V.), sonship is *felt*: “The Spirit himself *beareth witness with our spirit*, that we are children of God.” Here you have the concurrent testimony of the Holy Spirit bearing wit-

ness with the spirit of the believer that he is the child of God. So you have sonship both *alleged* and *felt*.

At a testimony meeting of Christians some time ago the question was asked, "What do you think is the greatest need of the Church today?" Someone answered, "That it may be fully assured of its filial relationship to God and believe beyond the shadow of a doubt the things God has promised to them that love Him." Well, it is God's desire that all His children should understand just what He means by the "earnest of the Spirit" and enjoy it to the full. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. . . . Who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Cor. 1:20, 22). There is a rendering of this verse which is beautiful: "And it is God who confirms me along with you in Christ, who consecrated me, who stamped me with his seal and gave me the Spirit as a pledge in my heart."

There is no need of the Christian going about, saying,

"Tis a point I long to know,  
Do I love the Lord or no?

or

When I can read my title clear to mansions in the  
skies,  
I'll bid farewell to every fear and wipe my weeping  
eyes.

Such doleful sighing and doubting and questioning is nothing short of casting aspersion upon the Word and promise of God. The moment we believe in Jesus Christ as our Saviour, we become children of God, and God

gives to us His Spirit to bear witness to that fact; every child of God should be able to look up into the face of God and say, "Abba, Father; my Father."

### Our Inheritance

And what is true with regard to the *pledge* and *earnest* of our sonship is equally true with regard to our future reward, our "inheritance." How wonderfully explicit are Paul's words in this regard: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:11-14).

An interesting rendering of verses 13 and 14 reads as follows: "You also have heard the message of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, and in him you also by your faith have been stamped with the seal of the long promised Holy Spirit, which is the *pledge* or *installment* of our common heritage, that we may obtain our divine possessions, and so redound to the praise of his glory."

Here you will note that the thought of "installment" is added to that of "pledge," so that we are to understand that we have received an installment already of the glory that is yet to come and which is reserved for the saints in Christ Jesus. In a certain sense, therefore, the Christian can really sing,

I've reached the land of corn and wine,  
And all its riches freely mine.

The man who has not a bit of Heaven in his soul in this life will never enter Heaven. The man who has the "firstfruits" of the Spirit will have the full harvest of spiritual enjoyment and blessing.

### God's Possession

The Holy Spirit is the *earnest* or *pledge* which God gives to His redeemed people signifying that they are His peculiar possession, and also that He will take care of that possession until the great day when He shall finally glorify His people with eternal bliss.

In the early days in England when a soldier enlisted in the army he was given a shilling, the acceptance of which signified that henceforth he belonged to his majesty the king and not to himself. So the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer seals him for God. This seal has two sides, according to II Timothy 2:19: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

In Asia Minor, in the apostolic days, it was customary for dealers in lumber to put their seal upon each log so that when the separating time came each owner would know what lumber belonged to him. So shall it be in that great day: "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." What a comfort and assurance that is for the believer!

"He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." I do not know much about the perseverance of the saints, but I am convinced of the perseverance of God.

He will keep me till the river  
Rolls its waters at my feet;  
Then He'll bear me safely over,  
Where the loved ones I shall meet.

Christ is the First and He is the Last. He is the End as well as the Beginning. He will finish what He has begun. Of this He has given the believer the assurance by the indwelling Holy Spirit, which is the *earnest* or *pledge* of all this: "Which is the earnest of our inheritance *until* the redemption of the purchased possession." I like that word *until*. It assures me that "I shall not be moved"; that "None can rob Him of His sheep, nor pluck them from His hand." "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" How blessed the word *until*! The Shepherd does not give up the search *until* He find His lost sheep.

Perverse and foolish oft was I,  
And yet in love He sought me;  
And on His shoulders, gently laid,  
Rejoicing, home He brought me.

"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not—be lacking, missing, wanting," for that is what the word "want" means. In that day when He gathers His sheep into His eternal fold I will not be missing. The Great Shepherd of the sheep will see to that. How do I know? I have the



*earnest* or *pledge* of it. "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:30-39).

When the twelve spies returned from their inspection of the Promised Land they brought with them large bunches of grapes which they had taken from the abundant vintage of that "land flowing with milk and honey" as a *sample* of the kind of grapes that were to be found in the new land, and were intended to be an encouragement to the people to go up and possess the land which God had promised them. That *sample* bunch of grapes was an "earnest"; it bore witness to the fact that in the Land of Promise there were grapes just like them and in abundant measure.

### A Pledge—What?

A woman goes into a store to buy a piece of dress goods. After she has chosen the pattern she desires, she asks the clerk to give her a small piece from the bolt from which she has made her purchase. The clerk cuts off a small piece and gives it to the customer, who then puts it into her purse. On the morrow, when the full order is delivered, the purchaser opens the package, takes the small piece of goods from her purse, places it on the goods and compares them. What for? To see that the full yardage is just like the sample. That little piece of goods was an "earnest"; it meant that what would come on the morrow was of the same kind and very much more.

The apostle has been speaking about some rich, glorious truths which are the possessions of the people of God and prepared for them by the unfailing God. He would assure them of the reality of these things, and in order to assure their hearts of this he tells them that God has put a little bit of Heaven into the hearts of His saints now, to encourage them to go on and believe that some day they will have the satisfaction of enjoying Heaven in all its completeness; that the partial experiences of the Christ-life which they have tasted here will some day be enjoyed in all its richness. Enough that we have the foretaste here; the full realization and enjoyment will surely follow.

Let us take an illustration from an egg. There it lies before us. We hear a slight pecking at the shell. We wait, and then we see a little bit of the beak of a chicken protrude; then the head; then a wing; then feet; until, in a few moments, a perfect chicken lies before us. Now why did God give to that life in the egg eyes, beak, feet,

wings, heart, and other organs? Was it not indicative of the fact that God did not intend that the chicken should spend its entire existence in the shell? Wings, eyes, feet appear—these were prophetic of larger, fuller life. So it is with the Christian. God never put these desires which earth cannot satisfy within our hearts, save in a prophetic sense, unless He intends to satisfy them sometime, somewhere.

God does not mock His people. When God put love in the heart of the youth, He put love in the heart of the maiden. When God gave the bird the desire to fly, He gave it the wings with which to fly. And when God put into the heart of the believer the desire for Heaven, for Christ, for holiness, to see God and be with Him forever, it was not to mock him. He intends that they shall all be filled to the full.

### Hallelujah Chorus!

I sat one day listening to the rendition of the *Messiah* by a great musical chorus. When the well-known "Hallelujah Chorus" was reached, the entire audience stood up in appreciation while that great chorus sang out, "Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; King of kings and Lord of lords; Hallelujah!" Who that has ever heard that chorus could keep his seat during its singing? There is an urge that raises one to his feet as though in recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The lady who was with me loved singing, but she herself was not able to carry a tune. When, however, she heard that great chorus sing of her Master and Lord, whom she devoutly loved and served, and found herself unable to join with them

in the grand hallelujahs, she turned to me and said, "William, will I ever be able to sing to my Saviour like that?" I answered, "Yes, you have the earnest, the wish, the desire to do so; some day that wish will be fulfilled." That saint of God had the "earnest" of the Spirit, you see.

Have you ever taken one of those large conch shells from the seashore and put it to your ear? What did you hear? I have often done it and heard the incoming and outgoing tide, the moaning of the wind, the rise and fall of the waves of the sea. I know where that shell came from; I know where it belongs. It came from and belongs to the sea. And when I put my ear to the heart of the child of God and listen to the longings after God, and Christ, and holiness, and purity, and immortality, and a desire to live with Christ and loved ones in that heavenly land—then as I listen I know that He who put those desires there does not intend to mock us, but to fulfill them. "He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."

### Our Loved Ones

We who have lost loved ones sometimes wonder if we shall meet them again and know them as our own. God has put within the heart of the child of God the assurance that such shall be his blessed experience. "Love is of God," and that love for your child continues even though its object has gone; that desire to see and be with your child—all this God intends to satisfy. Faith will bring that blessing to the bereaved heart. That abiding love for our children, even though they have gone ahead of us, is of God, providing, of course, that both parent and child are in Christ.

You can take kittens away from a cat and it will forget them in a few days. You can take a calf away from a cow and it will forget the calf in a week. But you can bring tears to the eyes and pain to the heart of that mother when you talk to her about that little girl that died in her arms forty years ago.

I think that one of the most beautiful poems that came to us from World War I was that written by a British mother who had lost her only son in Flanders' fields. Among other verses she gave us this one:

Some day, the soldiers will come back from France,  
And Britain will be bright with banners gay;  
And I shall see them marching past,  
The comrades of my boy—but not today.  
Someday—that golden someday which the future  
holds,  
When trumpets blow and angels line the way,  
My brave soldier boy will come to me  
Down the glittering ranks, and will say:  
"Well done, brave mother heart, the day at last has  
dawned;  
The parting and the pain have passed away."  
Yes, some day mine eyes shall see, my heart grow  
young,  
My arms embrace my soldier boy—in that golden  
day.\*

\* A glorious truth; undoubtedly true of a mother and son whose trust was in the Lord Jesus.

No, we do not, we cannot forget. Memory continues in the other life. Even Dives in Hades is called on to "re-

member." Surely then, the Christian will not forget his loved ones who have died in the faith and gone to be with Christ. It is not oblivion but blessed recognition of and fellowship with those "whom we have loved long since and lost awhile" that God has planned for the faithful in Christ Jesus. That is the reason that Christians are not to sorrow as others who have no such hope.

Perhaps you are battling with some great temptation and engaged in a fierce conflict with some besetting sin; after a defeat you cry out in the agony of your soul, "'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Will the day ever come when I shall be free from this awful temptation and terrible sin?" Oh, yes, my Christian friend. Look up, and take courage; that day will surely come! There is a land where no fearful traps are set for your fall, and where no subtle temptations dog your steps; a land where no sin ever enters, where "they sin no more." And some day, by His marvelous grace, you shall enter that land.

Perhaps you may have enjoyed "sweet glimpses of His face" down here; you have had a wonderful, conscious experience of the very presence of the Saviour; but it did not last long, and you have wondered if there ever would be a day when that experience would abide and never pass away. Oh, yes, child of the Father; that day, too, will come when you "shall see His face," when the tabernacle of God will be with men, "and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be their God." You have within your heart the *pledge* of God that this will be true.

Perhaps you have often wondered, after you have lost

a loved one by death, if you will ever see that loved one again; and why God put into your heart this love for your child, which seems to grow instead of diminish with the passing of the years, if there was no likelihood of its being some day satisfied. Well, my friend, the God who put that love into the Christian mother's heart did not put it there to mock her. In and through Christ the mother and her believing child will meet again.

There is an old hymn we used to sing that well expresses this comforting truth:

Beyond the silent river, in the glory summer land;  
In the beautiful forever, where the jeweled city  
stands;

Where ever-blooming flowers send forth their sweet  
perfume,

My heart's most loved and cherished, in heavenly  
beauty bloom.

And when I cross that river, the first I will adore;  
The first to bid me welcome upon that golden shore  
Will be my loving Saviour, the One who died for me,  
That in the long forever, from sin I might be free.

The next one who will greet me in the mansions fair  
and bright,

Will be my sainted mother, arrayed in garments  
white;

And then that greyhaired father, close pressing by  
her side,

Will grasp my hand with fervor just o'er the swelling  
tide.



Then curly-headed brother, and little sister dear,  
And bright-eyed little daughter, with merry laugh  
and cheer,

Will all then cluster around me, to bid me welcome  
home,

And watch with me the gathering of loved ones yet  
to come.

Oh, the joy that there awaits me, when I reach that  
golden shore;

To clasp the hands of loved ones, to part with them  
no more.

## CHAPTER V

### Our Future Reward

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

THE word "appear" in this text is a most striking and significant one. It is translated in the American Standard Revised Version, "We must all be made *manifest* before the judgment-seat of Christ." The idea conveyed by this word is that some disguise will be stripped from us as we stand before that tribunal, and we shall be made to appear in our true colors, our true self.

John, in his first epistle, has an interesting word to say along this line: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God [and such we are, R. V.]: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:1,2).

This is the idea conveyed in the word "appear" in our text: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." The word means "to be manifest as we really

are." The idea is that the child of God is in disguise during his pilgrimage in this world. The world does not really know him, appreciate him, nor recognize him at his true value or status. He is in reality royalty; he is the child of a king; some day all that will be revealed—at the "revealing of the sons of God."

### Reality vs. Posing

We are to appear before the judgment seat of Christ *without disguises*. It is difficult to read this without recalling our Lord's warning against hypocrisy. How few of us are really what we seem to be, or what people take us to be! There is so much pretense in the world. Stripped of our pretenses down here, how would we appear in the sight of our friends? Are we as holy as people take us to be? Do we pray and study our Bibles as we would have people think we do? Are we the saints we want people to take us to be? If people knew us as we really are, would we be occupying the pulpit, holding an office of prominence in the church of Christ, or be known as a Christian?

Jesus hated cant and hypocrisy. He never practiced it Himself. He detested it in His professing followers. His severest rebukes fell upon the heads of religious professors who were simply posing, and who desired to have a reputation for sanctity while not possessing holiness.

There is great danger of religious posing by those of us who profess to be Christ's followers. The world expects certain things from a Christian; he is supposed to be religious and to perform religious acts, and there is the great danger of trying to do and be just that very thing because

it is expected, while in reality he has no heart, part, or lot in the matter itself. These words, therefore, should cause much self-examination on the part of the followers of Christ. Some day we shall be stripped of all disguise. Should we not begin that work now, and try to be the thing we appear and profess to be?

### Post- Mortem Deeds

The Christian is to be rewarded for the things *done in the body*, that is to say, the things done *with* his body. One often wonders, as he reads these words and others like them, recorded in the Scripture, as to whether more emphasis ought not to be laid on the truth here taught. Is there such a thing as *post-mortem beneficence*? Will a man receive reward in that day for what he *leaves in his will*—but which he held on to for dear life *when alive* and would not distribute for the cause of Christ, for charity and the church? One often wonders about it. Andrew Carnegie said that it was “a sin to die rich.” Is it a sin for a Christian to leave all, or the most of his giving until after he has died? Does he really *give* or does he *leave* his possessions? “The deeds done in the body”—these are striking words. Let us spend and be spent for Christ while we live. Let us distribute that which Christ has given us, that we may see the blessing of it now. “Deeds done in [with] the body”—that is to say, done in our lifetime; and “post-mortem benevolence”—that is to say, things that we leave to be done after we die—which, think you, should characterize the Christian?

### Hurting Our Reward

Note, too, that the “bad” things we have done are to

be taken into account at the judgment seat of Christ. We are saved through faith; we are rewarded according to our works. Those who build on the true foundation, Jesus Christ, are rewarded. But it is quite possible to erect on that foundation "wood, hay, stubble"—things that will not stand the test of fire in that day; things of which we are or will be ashamed; things Christians ought never to have done or permitted to exist in their experience: greed; self-aggrandizement; indulgence in the forbidden thing; unsundered territory in the Christian experience, a keeping back of the money that should have been spent in His service and that would have furthered the cause of Christ in foreign fields, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, nourished the sick, and supplied the need of the impoverished. Yes, a Christian may be barely, scarcely, just saved, and no more; himself saved and his works destroyed—"saved, so as by fire."

Let us not forget that when we do wrong and sin, all is not ended when we confess and put away that sin. True, the guilt of it is put away, but it tells against us when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ. No man is quite the same after he has committed a sin as he was before—neither here nor hereafter.

### Degrees of Reward

There are to be degrees of reward in Heaven as there are to be degrees of punishment in Hell. The man who is "saved at the last moment" will not have the same reward in Heaven as the man who was saved in his youth and has devoted a whole life to the service of the Master. Some are over ten cities, some over five, some

over one. The cups of joy of the Christians will all be full, but they will not all be of the same size.

Nor is it to be understood that all men are punished alike in the other world. Some will have "many stripes"; others, "few stripes" inflicted on them. It is true that all men outside of the redemption that is in Jesus Christ and who have refused to accept Jesus as their Saviour are equally lost and shut out of Heaven; but it is not true that all such men receive the same degree of punishment for their unbelief in Jesus Christ and for their sinful life.

Perhaps if we Christians remembered that sin committed will mar our reward, we would be more careful about our conduct. There is too much sentimental teaching about the matter of sin committed by the Christian and forgiven. We should not go as far as Rome goes in her teaching about purgatory—that every sin committed requires a certain amount of penance in this life, and if not atoned for here by some act of penance on the part of the sinner, then it must be atoned for by suffering in purgatory in the other life. No, we believe that our sins are forgiven "for his name's sake" and solely on the ground of the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and that our merit or penance has nothing to do with the removal of the guilt of sin. But we do most firmly believe that sins committed on the part of the believer do affect his future reward. The matter of life and death is settled the moment a man believes on Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and so he will never appear before the "Great White Throne" judgment to be judged as to the question of eternal life or death; but he will stand before the tribunal of Christ, where the rewards of the Christian are distributed, and the measure

of his reward will be determined by the kind of life he has lived, and the amount and nature of the work he has done here.

### Abusing Grace

So many Christians think that if they are overtaken in a fault or commit a sin willfully and then kneel down and ask God for Christ's sake to forgive them, that that is all there is to it; that they may rise from their knees and shout, "Hallelujah, 'tis done; my sins are all taken away; it is as though I had never sinned!" Well, there is a sense in which the sin of the Christian is forgiven the moment he confesses it; but there is a stain left, a consequence which that sin has involved, and that enters into the future reward (yea, and sometimes into the earthly discipline) of the Christian. It is my opinion that when a Christian has committed a sin, and confessed it, he will not rise up from his knees shouting, "Glory, it's all put away!" My judgment is that he will not feel like shouting glory at all; he will feel so ashamed that he, a born-again child of God, should wound again and afresh the dear, dear hand that held him fast—I say he will feel so ashamed to think that he has brought sorrow to the heart of his Saviour that, like David, he will want to "walk softly before the Lord." "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" We will not, we cannot, for "he that hath died with him is freed from [the dominion of] sin."

It is true that the thief on the cross was saved in the last hour of his life—that is illustrative of the marvelous grace of God. But it would not be right to say that because the



thief went to Paradise that day he would have the same place and reward in Heaven that Paul the apostle, for example, with a whole life of service, plus faith, would have. No; that would not be just. Let us not abuse the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. Jesus did not intend to teach that the man who was saved at the last hour received as much reward as the man who had spent a whole lifetime in His service. The purpose of the parable was to illustrate that admittance into the kingdom is all of grace, and not of human labor or merit. It was given in response to Peter's declaration that he and the rest of the apostles had done what the rich young ruler had refused to do—"leave all, and follow him," and the consequent question: "What therefore shall we have?" Jesus would teach Peter that entrance into the kingdom is not put on any such bargaining basis. It is of grace. The thief on the cross was as surely in the kingdom as was Timothy who from a child had known God; but that does not mean that the thief and Timothy would have the same position in the kingdom. That I do not believe.

Just when the Judgment Seat of Christ is to be set up we perhaps may not be able definitely to say. Some think that it will be just before Jesus comes with His saints to reign upon the earth; others say that it takes place immediately after the believer dies, in which case there would be an individual judgment for each believer. I am of the opinion, however, that it is safe to say, inasmuch as the believer does not enter into the fullness of his reward until he has received his resurrection body, the Judgment Seat of Christ will be set up immediately after the resurrection of the bodies of believers.

That the Judgment Seat of Christ does not take place at the same time as the Judgment of the Great White Throne we are quite sure from the teaching of Revelation 20. At least one thousand years separates the two tribunals.

The Great White Throne Judgment is for the final pronouncement of eternal death upon the willfully disobedient and unbelieving (Rev. 21:8), whereas the Judgment Seat of Christ is for the rewarding of saints. The believer in Jesus Christ has passed out of death into life and shall never come into the Great White Throne Judgment. The matter of eternal life and eternal death was settled for the believer once for all when he passed out of death into life, the moment he relied upon the finished work of Calvary. The second death has no power over him. With the unbeliever it is quite different. He is still under the sentence of eternal death. Being born but once—the natural birth—he dies twice, the physical death and the spiritual death; whereas the believer being born twice—once naturally, and again supernaturally from above—he dies but once, the physical death, if the Lord tarries, but the second death has no power over him.

### Life's Appreciation

Not always in this world is the Christian rewarded for the good he has done. On the contrary he may meet misrepresentation, criticism, cruel treatment, persecution, even death, as the result of his endeavor to live a life well-pleasing to God.

And perhaps it is just because goodness does not always bring its own reward in this life that some people who start to live the Christian life soon give it up. When our

Lord spoke the parable of the sower. He mentioned the seed that was sown in shallow soil and which was soon scorched when the sun rose and shone upon it. This, He said, represented many who start on the narrow road that leads to life, and because they find thorns instead of roses and persecutions instead of congratulations, fall back again into their life of unbelief.

One of the hardest things to bear in this life is the failure on the part of our friends to appreciate us when we have tried to do our best. It is just this failure that has led many a minister to leave the ministry, many a Sunday school superintendent to resign his office, many a president of the women's society to relinquish her position, and many a follower of Christ to go back.

But, surely, that is not a sufficient reason for turning one's back on the work of Christ, or on Christ Himself. Our Lord would soon have to walk alone, if everyone in His service who was not appreciated refused any longer to engage therein. When the temptation comes to relinquish the task Christ has given us to perform, it is well to remember the great truth the apostle here affirms, namely, that the day is coming when, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, every bit of good that one has tried to do, in His name, every good word spoken in His behalf will not be overlooked, but will receive its full reward.

### No Wasted Good

Unappreciated good is not wasted, as so often we are prone to think and even say it is. We frequently hear people say, after they have done a bit of good, or spoken a word of kindness, or extended a helping hand, and instead

of it being appreciated it is censured or misrepresented and misunderstood, "What is the good of trying to be helpful? It is not appreciated; it is just wasted." But my friend, it is not; it is never wasted or thrown away. Perhaps, it is true that those on whom you bestowed the kindness, or in whose behalf you did that kindly deed, may have failed to appreciate it; but as surely as God's Word is true, you will receive your reward for it. Christ has not overlooked it.

In speaking to His disciples, Jesus said in substance: "When ye enter into a house, say, Peace be to this house . . . and if the son of peace be not there, your peace shall return to you." Note that: "Your peace shall *return* to you." It is not lost or wasted. "We shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may *receive back* [the thought of *receiving back* is in the Greek word] the things done in his body."

### Receiving Back

I was walking on the street one day with a physician friend of mine. He was a man who devoted a large part of his time in giving medical aid to the poor, without money and without price. As we walked together that day in particular two persons at different times came up and took him by the hand, and thanked him for helping a sick child and saving a loved one from the grave. The doctor said to me afterward, "I did not know those people and have forgotten the particular cases they refer to." But his ministry of mercy was not forgotten. Nor will the Christian's life of loving service for the Master be forgotten by

Him. All the good that he has done will "come back" to him.

### Life's Hurts

There was quite a long period in the life of Kipling when not much, if any writing came from his pen. He had been severely misunderstood in certain things he had written, and it hurt him. He voices this hurt in a poem he wrote. But note also that in this same poem he looks forward to the day when what he has done will be appreciated and understood:

When Earth's last picture is painted  
and the tubes are twisted and dried,  
When the oldest colours have faded,  
and the youngest critic has died,  
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—  
lie down for an aeon or two.  
Till the Master of All Good Workmen  
shall put us to work anew.

And those that were good shall be happy:  
they shall sit in a golden chair;  
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas  
with brushes of comets' hair.  
They shall find real saints to draw from—  
Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;  
They shall work for an age at a sitting  
and never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us,  
and only the Master shall blame;  
And no one shall work for money,  
And no one shall work for fame,  
But each for the joy of the working,

and each, in his separate star,  
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It  
for the God of Things as They are!

So we see that even Kipling was comforted with the idea that in some future day he would be fully understood and appreciated. It was this thought that healed his wounded spirit and set him to work again with renewed zest.

It is said of Verdi, that when he rendered one of his great compositions in the large opera house in Florence, he was greeted with tremendous applause. From every part of that spacious building there came handclapping and cheers. Yet, strange to say, Verdi's face did not betray any apparent appreciation of the applause. He stood there, fixed as it were, his eyes turned to but one part of the opera house. There on that spot stood his master and teacher. It was his approval and appreciation he was waiting for. And when Verdi's teacher bowed and nodded approval and pleasure, then the artist's face was wreathed in smiles. What were the plaudits of the multitudes to Verdi, if his master was not well pleased?

And so shall it be with us in that great day, should the Master say to us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. And will not that more than compensate for all the misunderstandings of earth, and the failures of our friends to appreciate what we have tried to do for the Master and the good of men?" It surely will. Let this great truth then of a coming day in which we shall be rewarded for all the good we have done, comfort and sustain us in this day when even perhaps our dearest friends fail to appreciate us.



I well recall that on one occasion my little daughter came to me with her copybook on the closing day of a school year. She asked me to look through it. I did. It was a splendid piece of work. Not a blot, not an erasure, not a mistake in the whole book. I was much pleased and put my hand in my pocket to get a coin to reward her for doing so well, as I always did when my children did well. I shall never forget the strange look in her face, and her deep blue eyes filled with tears, when I offered her the fifty-cent piece. She said, "Thank you, Papa dear; but I do not want the fifty cents; I am satisfied to know you are pleased and to have you say, 'Well done.'"

And so it shall be in the great day when the Master shall reward us for the good we have done. To hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," will make up for all the criticism, misrepresentation, and misjudgment we have suffered here upon the earth.

The sands of time are sinking,  
The dawn of heaven breaks;  
The summer morn I've sighed for,  
The fair, sweet morn awakes:  
Dark, dark hath been the midnight,  
But dayspring is at hand,  
And glory, glory dwelleth  
In Immanuel's land.

O Christ! He is the fountain,  
The deep, sweet well of love!  
The streams on earth I've tasted,  
More deep I'll drink above.



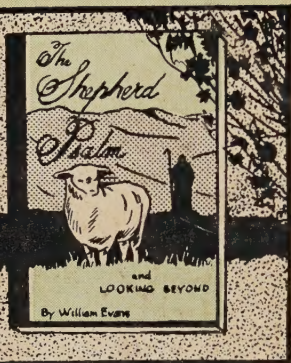
There, to an ocean fulness,  
His mercy doth expand,  
And glory, glory dwelleth  
In Immanuel's land.

Oh, I am my Beloved's,  
And my Beloved's mine!  
He brings a poor vile sinner  
Into His "house of wine."  
I stand upon His merit:  
I know no other stand,  
Not e'en where glory dwelleth  
In Immanuel's land.

The Bride eyes not her garment,  
But her dear Bridegroom's face;  
I will not gaze at glory,  
But on my King of grace.  
Not at the crown He giveth,  
But on His piercé hand:  
The Lamb is all the glory  
Of Immanuel's land.

—*Anne R. Cousin.*





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